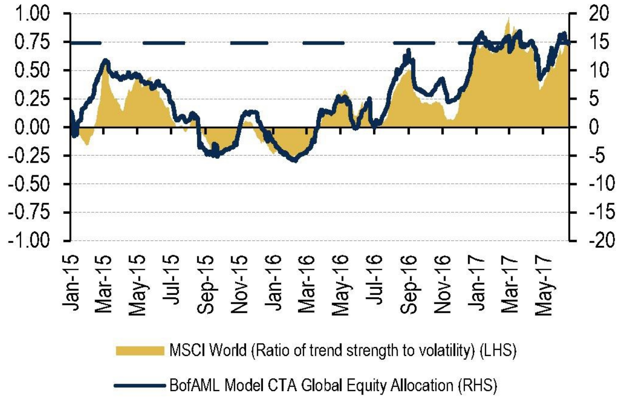
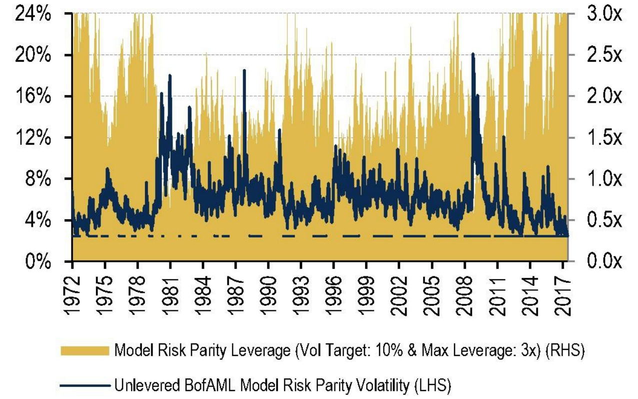
Chart 7: A combination of upward trending global equity markets and very low volatility have conspired to push trend following (CTA) equity positioning to near record levels. Consequently, the beta of CTA strategies to global equities is also at extreme levels



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Based on daily data form 2-Jan-2015 to 16-Jun-2017. CTA = Commodity Trading Advisor

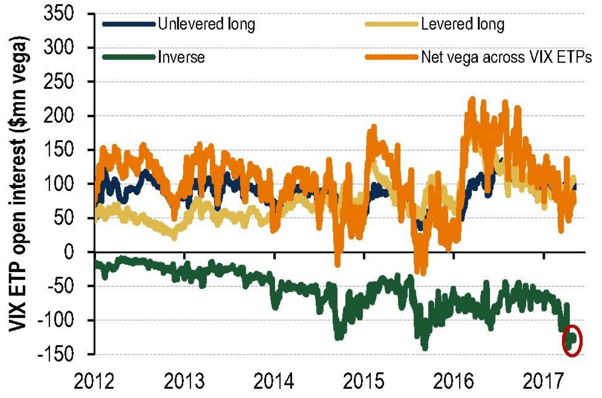
Chart 8: Owing to low cross asset vol and strong diversification, the volatility of risk-balanced multi-asset portfolios has fallen to historically low levels. Consequently, leverage levels across multi-asset & other portfolios that target fixed vol have likely hit their caps



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Based on daily data from 3-Jan-72 through 16-Jun-17. Equity, fixed income, and commodity components within the hypothetical risk parity investment are represented by the S&P500, 10-Year US Treasury Bonds, and the S&P GSCI Index, respectively. Risk parity allocations are determined and rebalanced monthly using prior 12-month realized volatility and correlations.

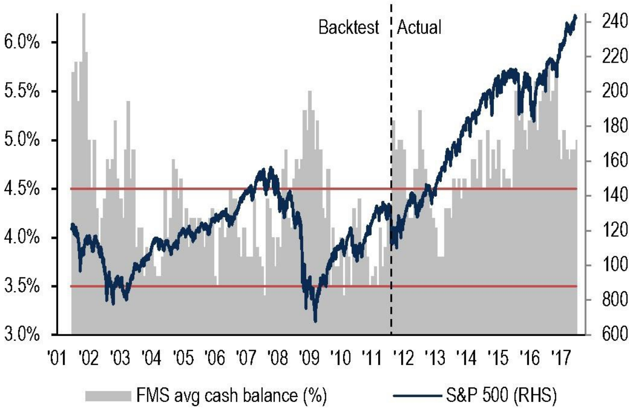
It is important to note that not all CTA, risk parity, or vol control strategies operate similarly and there is model risk in estimating the exact size of these trading flows.

Chart 9: The vega outstanding in inverse VIX ETNs has also reached a record high at ~$125mn vega



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Daily data from 13-Feb-12 through 16-Jun17.

Chart 10: Global FMS average cash balances (%) remain elevated, suggesting dry powder for investors still conditioned to buy equity dips



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Fund Manager Survey, Bloomberg. As a reminder, the FMS Cash Rule works as follows: when average cash balance rises above 4.5% a contrarian buy signal is generated for equities. When the cash balance falls below 3.5% a contrarian sell signal is generated.

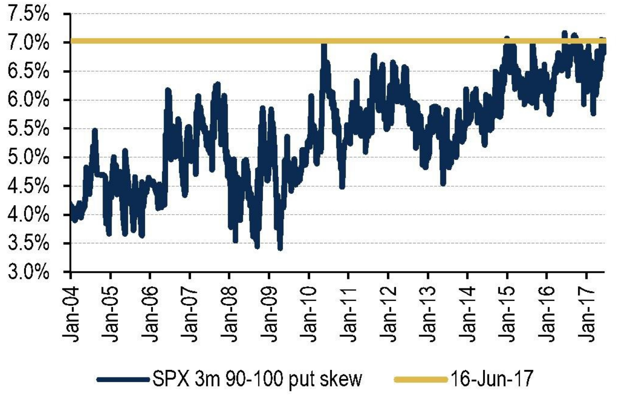
Extract risk-limited alpha from SPX range via cheap in-the-money knockout puts

As a risk-limited range trade, we like owning down-and-out puts on SPX that are already in-the-money. For example, the SPX Sep 2475 put with a 2300 knock-out (continuous observation) indicatively costs 70bps (spot ref 2451) and offers a 60% discount to the vanilla 2475/2300 put spread, which is itself historically cheap (Chart 12).

If SPX stays above the 2300 barrier at all points in time before expiry, the structure is equivalent to a 2475 put option. If the barrier is instead breached, the maximum loss will be equal to the (low) upfront premium. The 2300 barrier is about 6% out-of-the-money, hence “allows” for the elusive 5% correction not seen since Brexit (on a closing basis). However, investors can mitigate the risk of breaching the barrier by either moving it farther down (e.g., a 2245 barrier would indicatively raise the cost from 0.7% to 1%), or by only observing it on a close-to-close basis (in turn sacrificing part of the discount).

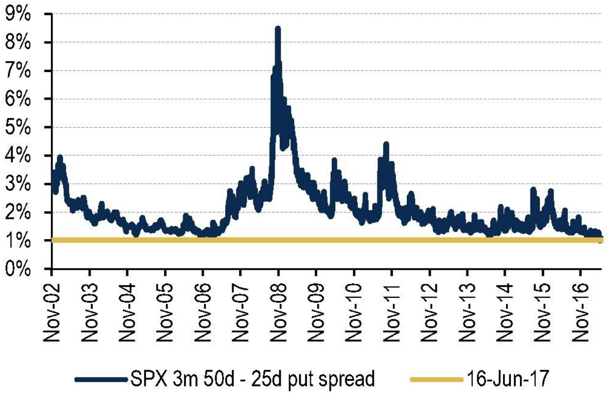
The trade prices attractively today due to exceptionally steep SPX put skew, which is near its highs established since 2004 (Chart 11). With steep SPX put skew, the market is implicitly pricing in a high probability that the option will knock-out during its life, i.e., that relatively large drawdowns are more likely. As detailed above, however, we see many reasons why the most likely near-term scenario for US equities is to remain range-bound. The structure is short 11% delta at inception and has the same vega sensitivity as the equivalent put spread (short 6bps).

Chart 11: SPX put skew is near the all-time highs reached since 2002. Steep skew helps cheapen knockout puts as the market is implying a relatively high probability of the barrier being breached



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data from Jan-04 to 16-Jun-17. The 90 and 100 strikes are based on the SPX forward.

Chart 12: The price of SPX put spreads is already near the lows reached since 2002. In particular, the price of a 3m 50d-25d put spread is ~1.02%, in the 0.1st %-ile since Nov-02



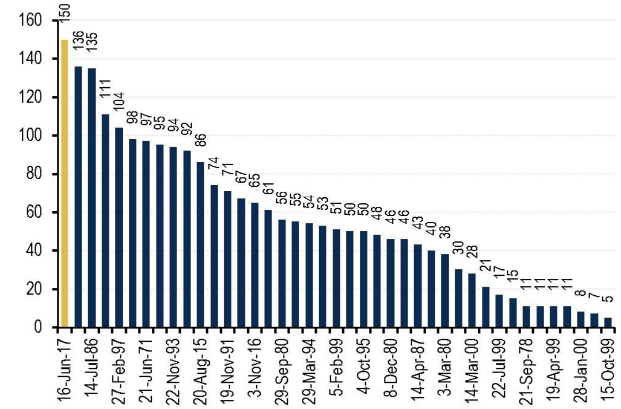
Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data from Nov-02 to 16-Jun-17.

Notable trends and dislocations (US)

The Fed turns more hawkish, though vol remains subdued

Last week, unsurprisingly the Fed opted to hike benchmark rates another 25bps. However, the market was more focused on the FOMC's unexpectedly hawkish message, which indicated that it is willing to normalize policy despite weaker-than-desired inflation. Our economists now think the Fed will announce balance sheet normalization in September and will hike rates again in December. A more hawkish Fed could result in higher real rates and a stronger USD, which ultimately should benefit our Growth to Value rotation trade of long XLF calls versus short QQQ calls (see Chart 15). The S&P 500 was more-or-less flat week-over-week as it gained only 6bps. The tech selloff continued, however, and the Nasdaq-100 dropped 105bps. Similarly, the Russell 2000 also dropped 105bps. Despite concerns on the Fed, the VIX fell 0.32 vol points to 10.38, and SPX 1m ATM implied vol declined 0.3 vol points to 7.6%.

Chart 13: The Nasdaq has set a new record for consecutive days without a 5% peak-to-trough drawdown

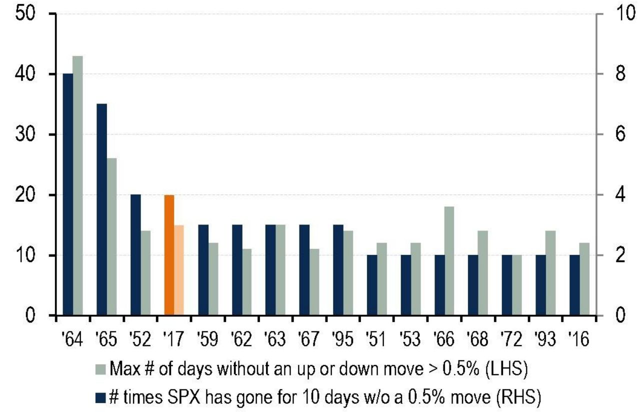


Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data from 1-Feb-71 to 16-Jun-17. Drawdowns measured from prior peaks and using close-to-close data.

On June 9, the Nasdaq dropped nearly 2% as investors unwound crowded positions, resulting in a sudden selloff from a period of relative calm. However, despite the volatility among tech names during the first week of June, the Nasdaq (CCMP) has not seen a 5% drawdown from a prior peak (using closing data) in 150 days. This is the longest such streak in the Nasdaq's history.

Prior to today, the longest periods of similar calm occurred during July '83 and July '86, when the index did not record a 5% drawdown from a peak in 136 and 135 days respectively.

Chart 14: On 16-Jun, the SPX had its 11th consecutive session of moves not exceeding 0.5% in either direction on a close-to-close basis. This is the 4th time this year that such a streak has surpassed 10 days

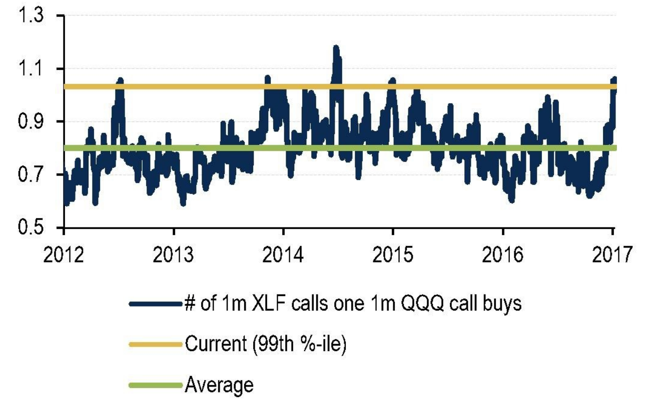


Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research, Bloomberg. Data from Jan-1928 to 16-Jun-2017.

Last week the S&P 500 recorded its 11th session without a move larger than 0.5% in either direction. As a result, 10d realized vol stood at 3.31% as of 16-Jun.

This is already the fourth time this year that SPX has gone more than 10 consecutive days without a move greater than +/- 0.5%. This has historically happened only in '64, '65 and '52. The longest such stretch this year lasted 15 consecutive trading sessions and ended on 16-May. For comparison, in '64 SPX had 8 stretches without such a move with the longest stretch spanning 43 days.

Chart 15: Buying an XLF 1m ATM call financed by selling a QQQ 1m call is still an attractive way for investors to rotate out of Growth and into Value



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data from 9-Jun-12 to 16-Jun-17.

Last week, we highlighted that investors who want to rotate out of Growth strategies into Value strategies should take advantage of elevated tech vol by buying XLF 1m ATM calls financed by selling QQQ 1m ATM calls. After last week's FOMC meeting, the case for such a trade grows even stronger as the market thinks the Fed has become more hawkish, driving up real rates and the USD. Amid this backdrop, one could see outperformance of Value names over Growth names, which tend to have higher amounts of offshore revenues that would come under pressure by a stronger dollar.

Additionally, the trade remains attractive at current levels as pricing has only been better 1% of the time in 5 years. Today, 1.03 XLF calls could be bought for each QQQ call sold, whereas over the past 5 years, the average number of XLF calls that could be purchased was only 0.80.

Table 2: Current S&P500 volatility and correlation measures relative to the prior two year of historical daily data

	1-week change				Over 2-year historical period				
	16 Jun 17	9 Jun 17	Change	Current ranking	Minimum	25%	Median	75%	Maximum
1-month ATM implied volatility	7.6%	7.9%	-0.3%	1.3%	7.1%	9.8%	11.7%	14.5%	31.8%
1-year ATM implied volatility	14.0%	14.0%	0.0%	7.7%	13.4%	15.3%	16.2%	17.3%	22.5%
1-week intraday realized volatility	7.8%	7.3%	0.5%	19.6%	5.2%	8.3%	10.6%	14.0%	53.7%
1-year minus 1-month term structure	6.5%	6.1%	0.4%	99.2%	-12.0%	2.7%	4.4%	5.4%	7.0%
3-month 90 minus 110 skew	8.5%	8.3%	0.2%	16.1%	7.1%	9.4%	11.3%	11.8%	13.8%
1-year top 50 implied correlation	45.44	45.10	0.35	8.1%	42.03	49.37	54.22	57.14	65.55
3-month top 50 realized correlation	21.30	24.08	-2.78	16.8%	12.57	27.15	37.28	48.45	60.41
VIX 1-month ATMf implied vol	81.9%	80.0%	1.9%	39.9%	61.2%	78.2%	85.0%	95.2%	162.2%
VIX 1-month 110 minus 90 skew	27.1%	26.9%	0.2%	88.6%	9.3%	18.6%	21.5%	23.8%	30.3%

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research

Volatility in Europe

Buy EU banks dispersion: (+) basket call, (-) worst-of calls

Trade: Long Dec17 105% call on an equally weighted basket of SAN, BNP, ING, ISP & DBK*, short Dec17 ATM worst-of call on the same basket for 1.8% indic. (correl bid: 81%).

** We pick the top 5 stocks with the largest market cap within the SX7E (EU banks sector index) corresponding to 5 different countries*

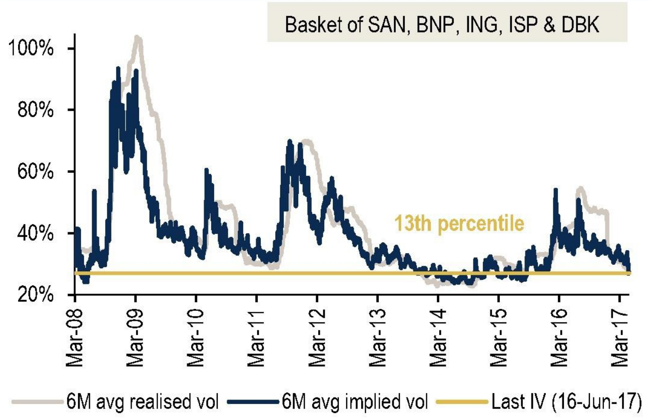
We have previously highlighted our preference for vol dispersion trades both in the US and the EU – with the most recent recommendation being sector dispersion opportunities within the EU. In a similar vein, we suggest positioning for greater dispersion within EU banks via buying a call on a basket of Santander, BNP Paribas, ING, Intesa and Deutsche Bank part-financed by selling a worst-of call on the same basket as:

- **Improving macro/earnings, sensitivity to rates and regulatory headwinds likely to lead to greater differentiation within banks**: An improving macro backdrop in Europe & ongoing improvement in EPS revisions (see Style Cycle) paint a bullish picture for EU banks as they are seen as leveraged macro plays within the EU. However, we believe there is a potential for greater differentiation within banks as our bank analysts have argued before (here and here) that: (i) some banks stand to benefit more than others based on their earnings power should the uptick in the earnings cycle continue, (ii) banks' gearing to interest rate cycles, and therefore likely impact from a more hawkish ECB, varies between different banks and (iii) French and Benelux banks are likely to be most impacted under potential Basel IV regulations.

- **Entry point is attractive given historically low implied vols:** The structure benefits from its long vol bias as average 6M implied vol on the basket of 5 European banks is historically low (13th %-ile since Jan-08, Chart 16).

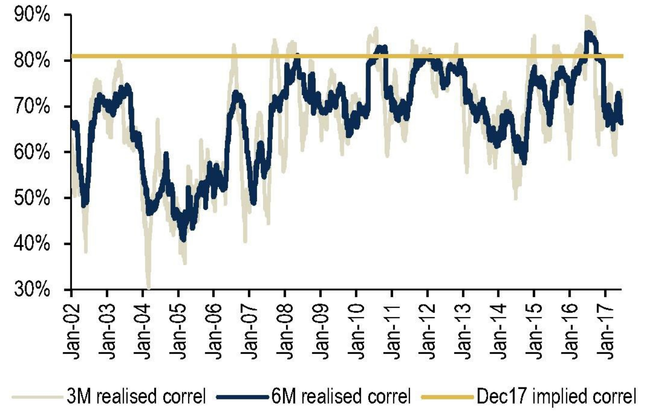
- **High implied correlation beneficial for structure's short correlation bias**: Chart 17 shows the average pairwise 6M and 3M realised correlations between the 5 EU banks, which are historically low. Despite this recent drop in realised correlations, implied correlation is priced higher, thus providing an interesting entry point for the (short-correlation) trade.

Chart 16: SAN, BNP, ING, ISP and DBK average 6M ATMf implied vol is trading historically low (13th percentile since 2008)



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data: 2-Jan-08 to 16-Jun-17

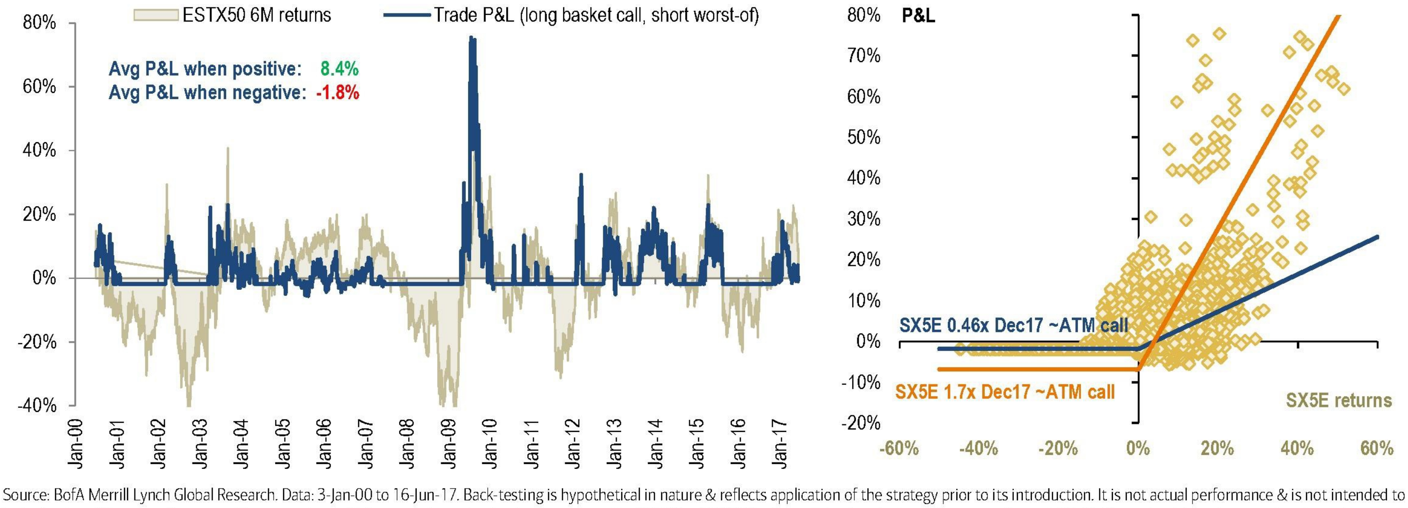
Chart 17: Despite the recent drop in realized correlation, implied correlation is priced near the high end of the reaiised range for the basket of EU banks



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data: 2-Jan-08 to 16-Jun-17

- **Attractive risk-reward profile at current pricing**: As highlighted in Exhibit 1, historically the trade held to expiry, at current pricing, would have generated an average P&L of 8.4% when positive and -1.8% when negative. The risk-reward looks even more attractive in extreme market outcomes as the max P&L of the trade which is greater than 75% compares to the max loss of only 5.7%. The trade also provides an effective way to gain long exposure to EU equities with limited risks, as evident from the call-like payoff in Exhibit 1 (vs the ESTX50). It is worth noting that, by construction, the maximum loss of the trade is 6.8% with the most likely loss limited to the upfront premium of 1.8%. We also note that the trade payoff profile is superior to a SX5E Dec17 ATM call when sized such that: (i) the call premium is the same as the upfront premium for the dispersion trade (=1.8%, blue line), as well as (ii) when the call premium is the same as the theoretical maximum loss for the trade (=6.8%, orange line).

Exhibit 1: Hypothetical back-test of long Dec17 105% call on a basket of SAN, BNP, ING, ISP & DBK, short Dec17 ATM worst-of call on the same basket (upfront premium = 1.8%)



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data: 3-Jan-00 to 16-Jun-17. Back-testing is hypothetical in nature & reflects application of the strategy prior to its introduction. It is not actual performance & is not intended to be indicative of future performance. The two call payoff diagrams shown in the chart correspond to SX5E Dec17 3575 strike call sized such that upfront premium = 1.8% (0.46x notional, blue line, equal to the upfront premium for the trade) and 6.8% (1.7x notional, orange line, equal to potential max loss of the trade)

Notable trends and dislocations (Europe)

European equities ended the week lower mainly due to a tech-driven sell-off on 12-Jun during which the SX8P (European tech sector) witnessed its largest 1-day decline since the UK's EU referendum. Nevertheless, implied vols across European indices remained mostly unchanged near 2 year lows.

- **European intra-sector correlation continues to decline while inter-sector correl has hit a floor:** The average EU intra-sector 3m correlation is near a 10-year low currently. In contrast, the average 3m inter-sector correlation reached a 10-year low in Mar-17 driven by post US election reflation trades but is now rising off its lows likely driven by an unwind of reflation trades.

- **SX7E implied-realised correlation near 5-year highs:** SX7E 6m implied correlation fell since Mar-17 but the implied-realised correlation spread remains in the 88th 5-year percentile driven by even lower realised correlation.

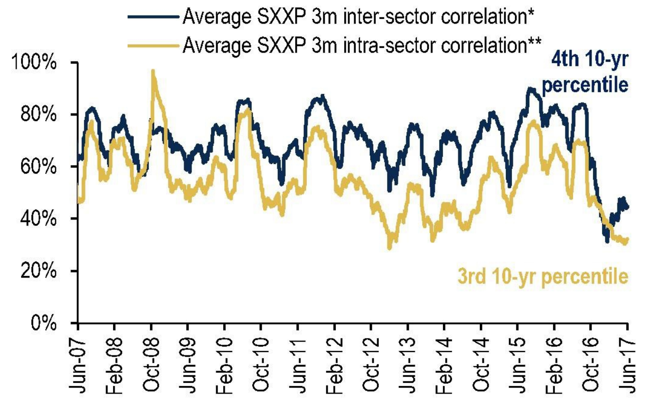
- **ESTX50 3M put skew is near 5 year highs**, in stark contrast to SXEP (European Oil & Gas equity) put skew which is close to 5 year lows.

- The overall seasonality in ESTX50 realised volatility since 1987 has been one of relatively lower vol during the summer months vs. autumn. In particular, **May stands out as the lowest vol month across most 10 year horizons**, and this also appears to be the case so far this year.

EU Intra-sector correl continues to decline while inter-sector correl is supported

The average European intra-sector 3m correlation is near a 10-year low, partly driven by divergence within the personal & household goods, utilities, real-estate, autos and insurance sectors (Chart 18 and Table 3). Interestingly, the average 3m inter-sector correlation reached a 10-year low on 14-Mar-17 (as the 8-Nov-16 US election led to the outperformance of sectors sensitive to inflation) but inter-sector correlation now seems supported likely driven by the unwind of reflation trades (Chart 18).

Chart 18: European intra-sector realised correlation is near a 10-year low, which suggests that we are currently in a stock pickers environment



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. 3m correlations calculated using daily returns and assuming current weights. Data from 16-Mar-07 to 16-Jun-17. *Average correlation between each of the 19 SXXP sector indices and the other SXXP sector indices. **Average of the 19 intra-sector correlations (in Euro) where the 19 sector indices are the indices which make up the SXXP index. Note that the average intra-sector correlation calculated using returns in local currencies is also near a 10-year low (2nd 10-yr percentile).

Table 3: Personal & household goods, utilities, real-estate, autos and insurance are the top 5 sectors with the lowest 10-yr percentile of intra-sector 3m realised correlation

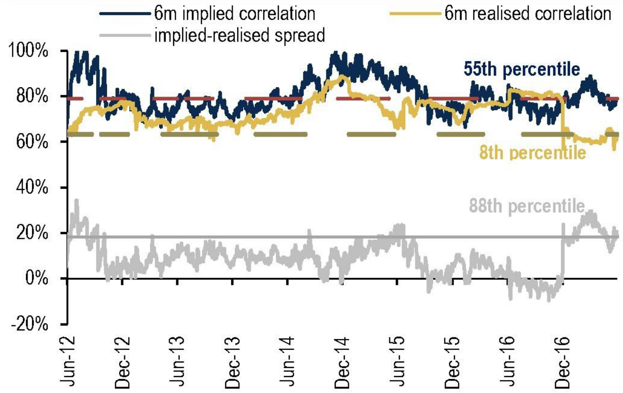
		Intra-sector 3M correl	
Sector ticker	**Sector name**	**Level**	**10yr %-ile**
SXQP	Pers. & Hous. Goods	17%	0%
SX6P	Utilities	24%	1%
SX86P	Real estate	40%	1%
SXAP	Autos	41%	1%
SXIP	Insurance	32%	1%
SXRP	Retail	19%	4%
SXTP	Travel	26%	5%
SXFP	Financials	28%	5%
SX4P	Chemicals	28%	6%
SXNP	Industrials	30%	7%
SXPP	Basic res.	50%	11%
SXDP	Health care	24%	11%
SXMP	Media	27%	12%
SXOP	Construction	39%	13%
SXKP	Telcos	32%	14%
SXEP	Oil & Gas	42%	21%
SX7P	Banks	47%	23%
SX3P	Food & bev	31%	25%
SX8P	Tech	35%	35%

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. 3m correlations calculated using daily Euro returns and current weights. Data from 16-Mar-07 to 16-Jun-17.

SX7E implied-realised correlation near 5 year high, driven by stock-level divergence

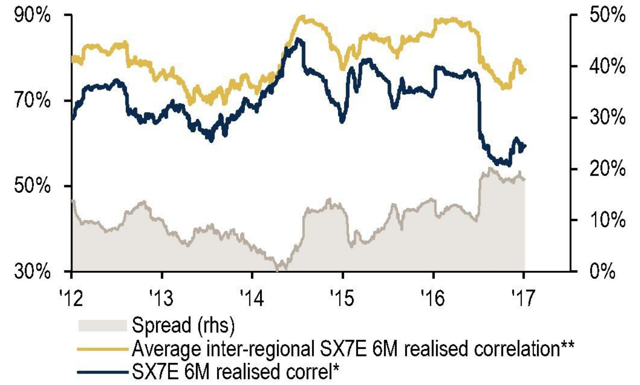
SX7E 6m implied correlation has fallen since Mar-17 but the implied-realised correlation spread remains in the 88th 5 year percentile (Chart 19). Notably, the low SX7E 6m realised correlation in 2017 was mostly driven by company-specific rather than region-specific divergence (Chart 20).

Chart 19: The SX7E 6m implied-realised correlation spread has been high throughout 2017 and remains in the 88th 5-year percentile



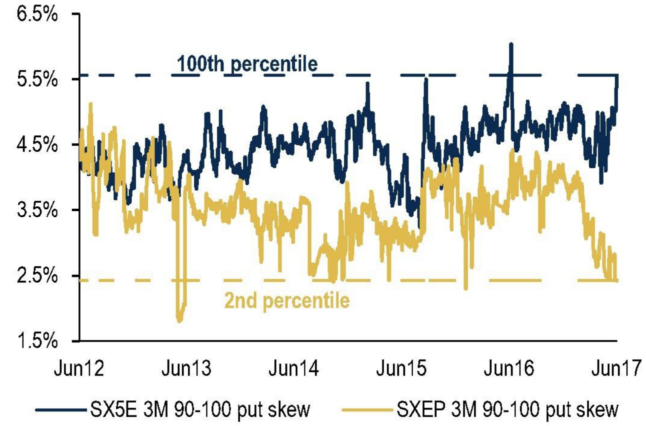
Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data: 16-Jan-12 to 16-Jun-17. Implied and realised correlations are calculated using current weights.

Chart 20: The decline in SX7E 6M realised correlation appears to be mainly due to company-specific rather than region-specific divergence



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data: 16-Jan-12 to 16-Jun-17. *Calculated based on current weights of French, German, Italian and Spanish banks with enough price history. **We construct theoretical portfolios consisting of SX7E names from a given country (France, Germany, Italy and Spain) and compute the average pairwise correlation of their daily returns

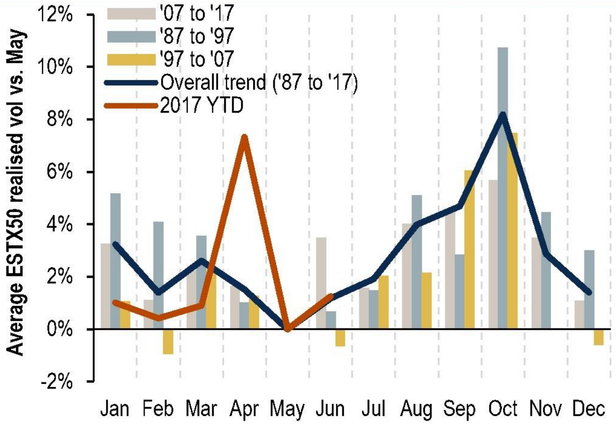
Chart 21: ESTX50 3M put skew is near 5yr highs, in stark contrast to SXEP (European Oil & Gas equity) put skew which is close to 5yr lows



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data: 16-Jun-12 to 16-Jun-17.

ESTX50 put 3M 90-100 (%fwd) put skew has re-steepened to near 5 year highs following the flattening which ensued after the first round of the French presidential elections (23-Apr). The recent ESTX50 skew dynamics are in stark contrast to what has been witnessed in the SXEP (European Oil & Gas equity), where the 3M 90-100 volatility spread has been trending lower and is currently near-flattest in 5 years.

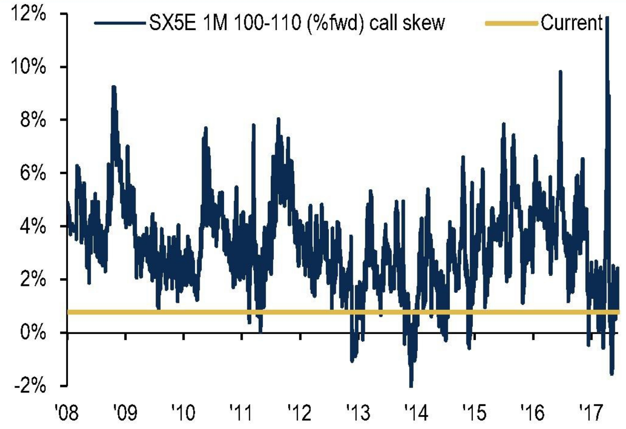
Chart 22: May has typically been the month with the least amount of ESTX50 realised volatility. This has also been true in 2017 thus far



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data: 1-Jan-87 to 16-Jun-17.

The overall seasonality in ESTX50 realised volatility since 1987 (ESTX50 inception) has been one of relatively lower vol during the summer months vs. autumn. In particular, May stands out as the lowest vol month across most 10 year horizons, and this also appears to be the case so far this year. We note that Apr-17 vol stands out mainly due to the 4% ESTX50 move on the Monday following the first round of the French presidential elections.

Chart 23: ESTX50 1M 100-110 call skew is near-flattest since 2008



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Data: 2-Jan-08 to 16-Jun-17.

ESTX50 short-dated (1M) 100-110 (%fwd) call skew has flattened considerably since pre-French election (23-Apr) levels and currently stands near 9 year+ lows. Consequently, limited upside structures (e.g., call spreads) price attractively both from an ATMf volatility and skew basis.

Table 4: Volatility measures of major equity indices in the EMEA region (data as of 16-Jun-17)

	3Mth ATM implied volatility			10D realised volatility			12Mth–3Mth ATM i-vol spread			3Mth 90-110 skew			Equity index
	Current	Weekly change	2Yr percentile	Current	Weekly change	2Yr percentile	Current	Weekly change	2Yr percentile	Current	Weekly change	2Yr percentile	Weekly return
ESTX50	13.4%	0.3%	2%	9.6%	2.0%	17%	3.4%	-0.2%	99%	8.4%	0.9%	72%	-1.2%
FTSE	10.0%	-0.4%	1%	8.6%	1.1%	24%	3.6%	0.2%	100%	6.2%	0.2%	9%	-0.8%
DAX	12.6%	0.3%	1%	12.7%	2.9%	29%	3.9%	-0.2%	100%	8.5%	0.7%	67%	-0.5%
CAC	13.3%	0.3%	3%	10.3%	2.0%	21%	2.6%	-0.1%	100%	8.6%	1.2%	77%	-0.7%
SMI	11.4%	-0.1%	3%	12.2%	3.3%	44%	2.4%	-0.1%	96%	6.5%	0.1%	27%	1.3%
RDXUSD	25.9%	0.9%	29%	16.2%	-1.2%	17%	0.9%	-0.4%	58%	5.2%	0.4%	27%	-3.7%
TOP40	16.9%	1.3%	17%	10.6%	0.2%	15%	1.7%	-0.5%	47%	8.0%	0.4%	36%	-3.0%
ISE30	20.2%	0.4%	6%	10.1%	-1.4%	5%	3.1%	-0.3%	81%	6.9%	0.1%	74%	-0.8%

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research

European volatility: Sector snapshot

Table 5: Volatility measures and indicative option prices for major European sector indices (data as of 16-Jun-17)

					Bearish	<<<<	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	>>>>	Bullish		
	3Mth ATMf implied volatility			Real vol*	3Mth 95%-85% put spread**				3Mth 100%-110% call spread**				3Mth 90%-110% risk reversal**			Equity index
	Current	Weekly change	2Yr %-ile	Current	Current price (% of spot)	Weekly change (bps)	2Yr %-ile	Max payout ratio	Current price (% of spot)	Weekly change (bps)	2Yr %-ile	Max payout ratio	Current price*** (% of spot)	Weekly change (bps)	2Yr %-ile	Weekly return
SX3P (Fd&Bv)	10.7%	-0.4%	2%	10.1%	0.6%	-5	2%	16.4	2.1%	-8	7%	4.8	-0.2%	5	80%	1.3%
SX6P (Utils)	12.2%	0.0%	4%	10.9%	0.8%	2	4%	12.8	2.4%	1	5%	4.2	-0.3%	0	95%	-0.1%
SX7E (Banks)	22.7%	0.3%	2%	18.6%	1.9%	2	3%	5.4	3.6%	2	9%	2.8	-0.5%	0	52%	-3.0%
SX7P (Banks)	18.5%	-1.2%	2%	13.1%	1.5%	-10	3%	6.8	3.2%	-15	5%	3.2	-0.4%	10	86%	-1.9%
SXAP (Auto)	16.7%	-1.2%	1%	11.7%	1.3%	-12	1%	7.8	3.0%	-13	1%	3.3	-0.4%	6	68%	-0.7%
SXDP (Health)	13.0%	-0.8%	1%	8.7%	0.9%	-9	2%	11.5	2.5%	-12	3%	4.0	-0.3%	4	71%	0.0%
SXEP (Oil&Gas)	15.4%	0.0%	3%	11.8%	1.2%	0	3%	8.5	2.8%	2	2%	3.6	-0.2%	-2	97%	-1.3%
SXIP (Insur)	14.0%	-0.9%	1%	9.4%	1.0%	-10	1%	10.0	2.7%	-11	1%	3.7	-0.4%	6	83%	1.0%
SXKP (Telecom)	15.4%	0.3%	3%	11.1%	1.1%	3	3%	8.8	2.8%	5	5%	3.6	-0.3%	-3	83%	-1.3%
SXNP (Indust)	16.3%	0.1%	13%	10.9%	1.2%	1	23%	8.1	2.8%	1	10%	3.6	0.0%	0	100%	-0.3%
SXPP (Basic)	23.8%	-0.7%	3%	17.8%	2.0%	-7	3%	5.1	3.5%	0	4%	2.9	-0.3%	-7	53%	-4.8%
SXQP (Prsnl&HH Gds)	10.2%	0.0%	1%	7.2%	0.5%	-1	2%	18.5	2.0%	-1	1%	4.9	-0.3%	1	76%	0.3%
SXRP (Retail)	13.2%	0.4%	10%	12.8%	0.9%	8	10%	11.3	2.5%	14	10%	4.0	-0.1%	-10	78%	-3.3%
SXTP (Trvl&Lsre)	14.4%	0.0%	7%	11.6%	1.0%	1	7%	9.9	2.7%	0	8%	3.7	-0.3%	1	41%	0.5%

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research *Real vol = EWMA (Exponentially Weighted Moving Average) volatility, which measures historical price volatility but assigns greater importance to recent returns. Sigma(t)^2 = 0.94*Sigma(t-1)^2+(1-0.94)*r(t)^2, where r(t) is the return on day t. **Indicative mid prices; strikes as % of forward ***Negative values indicate that the bullish risk reversal takes in a credit.

Volatility in Asia

Long HSCEI-SPX volatility spread via corridor variance

Global synchronized monetary tightening is positive for EM vol

Emerging markets have been the biggest beneficiaries of the central bank-fueled abundance of liquidity. However, we think the tide may be turning as last week, the Fed, ECB, and BOE all delivered policy announcements with hawkish tones. How far they really go to tighten policy when economic data is weakening still remains unknown. However, we think the uncertainty surrounding tightening will be more positive for EM volatility than for DM volatility.

Chinese banks: Rapid increase in leverage is a big concern

The HSCEI currently has a 70% weight in the financial sector. Recently, BofAML analyst Winnie Wu turned very bearish on the sector as (1) leverage has rapidly increased—debt to GDP rose by 18% in 2016 and may go above 300% by 2019, (2) shadow banking has become too big, too complicated, and too levered to easily regulate—even at the highest quality bank, China Merchants, off-balance sheet wealth management products (WMP) have grown to 40% the size of on-balance sheet assets from just 18% two years ago, and (3) excessive home price inflation—low and middle-income households are late to the party and a correction in prices could have a systemic effect as property assets have been used as collateral in WMPs.

SPX: The Fed is now "collaring" the market

Since the global financial crisis the Fed has been well known for providing a put option by its willingness to step in during periods of market stress. However, post the Fed meeting last week, it appears the central bank has decided to cap its monetary support as some FOMC members seem worried that financial conditions are too loose. Effectively, the market is now "collared" (more so for the SPX compared to EM) as the downside is protected by the Fed put (though with a lower strike price) while the upside is capped by log-jammed fiscal policy and positioning, where the risk of quant funds selling record equity positions meets cashed-up investors still accustomed to buying-the-dip.

The depressed implied China vs. US risks should reverse

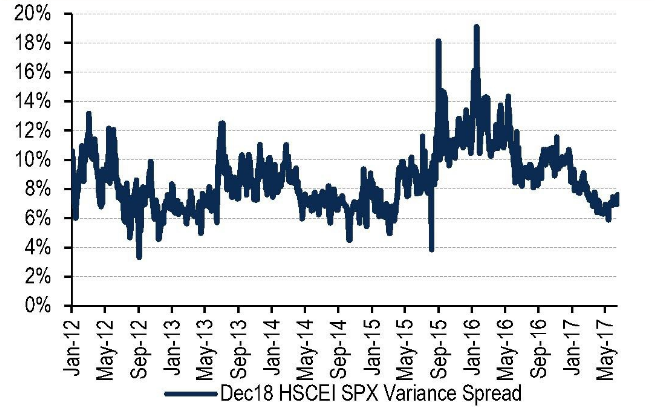
With the steep drop in global risk premium, the HSCEI-SPX 18-month variance swap spread has fallen back to the lower-end of its 5-year trading range. Since we believe the global synchronized monetary tightening will impact HSCEI volatility more than SPX volatility, we recommend owning HSCEI-SPX 70/110% corridor variance at 5 vol points, a 3 vol point discount to vanilla variance spreads. Investors will be exposed to the realized vol spread between HSCEI and SPX as long as HSCEI stays within 70-110% of its initial level. Pricing of corridor variance is cheaper than vanilla variance as investors can avoid paying for the rich HSCEI convexity below the 70% barrier. The trade has a positive carry and benefits during China risk-off events.

Note that the potential HSCEI index enhancement will reduce the financial weightings in HSCEI from 70% to 50% and lower realized volatility by 1.8 vol points. However, the enhancement will be implemented in stages. It will probably start in Dec-17 at the earliest and will not be fully implemented by the end of 2018, in our view.

Indicative pricing (As of 19-Jun-17)

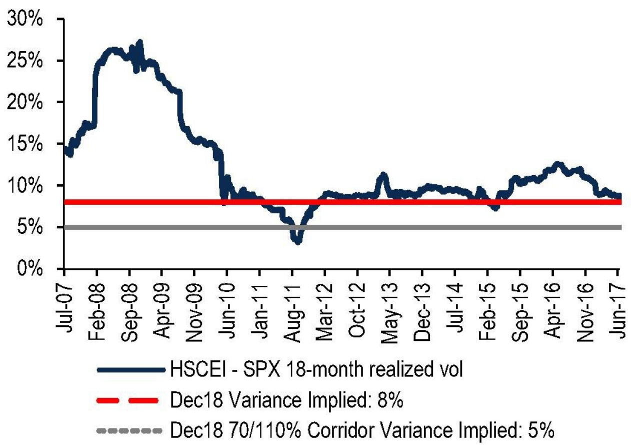
Buy HSCEI-SPX Dec-18 70/110% corridor variance swap: 5 vol points

Chart 24: The HSCEI-SPX Dec-18 (18-month) variance swap spread is back to the lower-end of its 5-year trading range



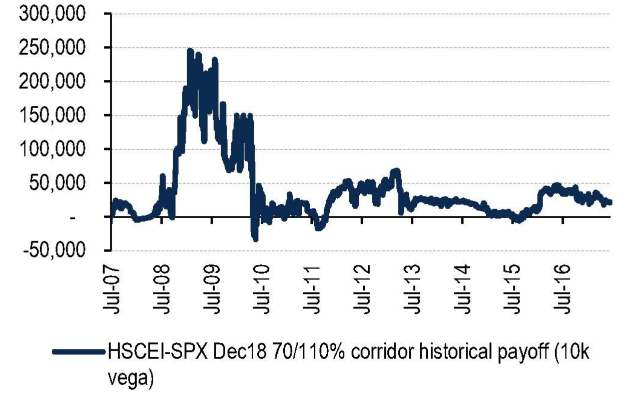
Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research Data as of 2-Jan-12 to 16-Jun-17
18-month constant maturity variance swap spread is used as a proxy of Dec18 variance swap spread

Chart 25: The long term HSCEI-SPX realized vol spread has been higher than the current implied corridor variance spread (5%) 98% of the time since 2007



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research Data as of 2-Jul-07 to 16-Jun-17

Chart 26: Historical payoff of buying HSCEI-SPX Dec-18 70/110% corridor variance spread; higher payoffs during 2011-2012 and 2015 sell-offs



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research Data as of 2-Jul-07 to 16-Jun-17

Table 6: The HSCEI-SPX Dec-18 70/110% corridor variance trade has a positive carry with realized vol across most tenors higher than the current implied corridor variance swap spread

	HSCEI	SPX	Spread
1M realized vol	12.1%	4.6%	7.5%
3M realized vol	13.7%	6.8%	6.9%
6M realized vol	14.0%	6.8%	7.2%
12M realized vol	16.6%	9.7%	6.9%
18M realized vol	20.8%	11.99%	8.8%
HSCEI – SPX Dec18 70/110% corridor variance offer:			5.0%

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research

Notable trends and dislocations (Asia)

Most regions in Asia reported modest declines last week, led by Hong Kong's HSCEI, which lost 2.0% week-over-week. Much of the decline came on Thursday following the US Fed's decision to hike rates 25bps. Also in China, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) injected 410bn yuan (about $60bn) into the financial system via reverse-repos, the largest cash boost since January. The central bank said the funds are meant to ease concern amid a seasonal funding squeeze. The biggest contributors to the index's loss were financials names, including China Life Insurance (2628 HK), which fell 5.7%, Ping An Insurance Group Co of China Ltd (2318 HK), which dropped 3.7%, Bank of China Ltd (3988 HK), which declined 1.8%, and China Merchants Bank Co Ltd (3968 HK), which fell 5.7%. We saw a similar decline from Hong Kong's HSI index, which lost 1.6% percent last week.

After the HSCEI and HSI, last week's biggest losers were Korea's KOSPI and India's NIFTY, which each returned -0.8% week-over-week. In Japan, the Nikkei fell 0.3%. On Friday, the Bank of Japan (BoJ) left its monetary policy unchanged—it will continue to control the yield curve via its negative benchmark rate and its asset purchasing program. The final region to report a loss last week was Taiwan's TWSE, which lost 0.4%.

On the other hand, the only region to see a gain last week was Australia, which saw its ASX 200 benchmark increase 1.7% week-over-week. The biggest contributors to the gain were Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA AU), which gained 3.4%, Westpac Banking Corp (WBC AU), which increased 1.9%, and CSL Ltd (CSL AU), which added 2.9%.

10 day realized vol picked up in Asia last week, up 2.0 vol points to 9.6%

- Asian 3m ATM volatility declined on average 0.1 vol point to 12.3% last week, while 10 day realized vol increased on average 2.0 vol points to 9.6%. Notably, the HSI's realized vol increased 5.4 vol points, the biggest increase in the region. On the other hand, the NKY was the only index to see a decline in 10 day realized vol—it dropped 4.3 vol points week-over-week to 7.2%.

- On average, term structures among Asian indices steepened by 0.2 vol points to 4.2% last week. The TWSE 12M-1M term structure steepened the most, increasing 1.0 vol point to 2.9%. On the other hand, Hong Kong's HSI saw the only flattening as its term structure flattened 0.1 vol point to 4.9%.

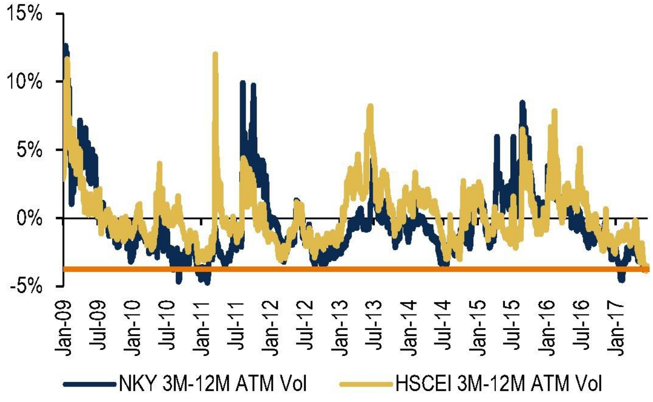
- Asian 3M 90-110% skews widened 0.5 vol points on average to 3.8%. Taiwan's TWSE widened the most, increasing 2.3 vol points to -0.2%.

Table 7: Volatility measures of major Asian indices (data as of 16-Jun-17)

	3Mth ATM Implied Volatility			10D Realized Volatility			12Mth-1Mth ATM Vol Spread			3Mth 90-110 Skew Spread			Equity Market
	Current	Weekly change	4Yr percentile	Current	Weekly change	4Yr percentile	Current	Weekly change	4Yr percentile	Current	Weekly change	4Yr percentile	Weekly return
HSI	12.4%	0.2%	2.1%	10.2%	5.4%	20.6%	4.9%	-0.1%	97.8%	3.3%	0.9%	41.4%	-1.6%
HSCEI	15.0%	-0.4%	0.0%	10.7%	4.8%	7.8%	5.4%	0.2%	98.1%	1.4%	0.5%	36.5%	-2.0%
NKY	13.8%	-0.2%	0.1%	7.2%	-4.3%	1.8%	5.8%	0.5%	99.9%	5.8%	0.0%	73.9%	-0.3%
KOSPI 200	12.2%	0.2%	19.7%	11.1%	1.1%	53.1%	4.0%	0.2%	77.0%	3.8%	0.3%	43.7%	-0.8%
ASX 200	11.8%	-0.2%	17.7%	15.7%	5.1%	77.1%	2.7%	0.0%	59.5%	6.4%	-0.1%	22.5%	1.7%
NIFTY	10.7%	0.2%	2.2%	4.8%	1.0%	0.4%	4.0%	0.0%	76.1%	5.9%	-0.1%	64.1%	-0.8%
TWSE	10.5%	-0.6%	7.2%	7.8%	1.0%	20.3%	2.9%	1.0%	71.2%	-0.2%	2.3%	3.9%	-0.4%

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research

Chart 27: Both HSCEI and NKY term structures are near record steeps; we favor calendar puts to hedge downside risks



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research Data as of 2-Jan-09 to 16-Jun-17

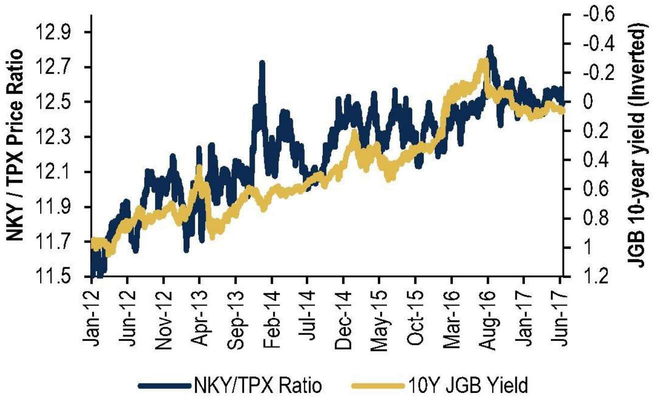
Calendar puts are attractively priced given the steep term structure

With the continuous low realized volatility environment, both NKY and HSCEI 3-month minus 12-month term structures steepened to -3.7 vol points, which are near multi-year lows.

As our strategists think the Fed now appears concerned about surging asset prices, investors should consider downside hedges. Calendar puts, i.e. buying short-dated ATM puts and selling long-dated OTM puts, are attractively priced given the steep term structure.

Currently, we still have an open trade on NKY calendar puts (buy Jul-17 19,500 puts vs sell Dec-17 17,500 puts) to hedge downside risks.

Chart 28: The Nikkei/Topix ratio and its volatility is capped with the BoJ's ongoing yield curve control



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research Data from 2-Jan-12 to 16-Jun-17

The BoJ's ongoing yield curve control has capped the Nikkei/Topix ratio and its volatility

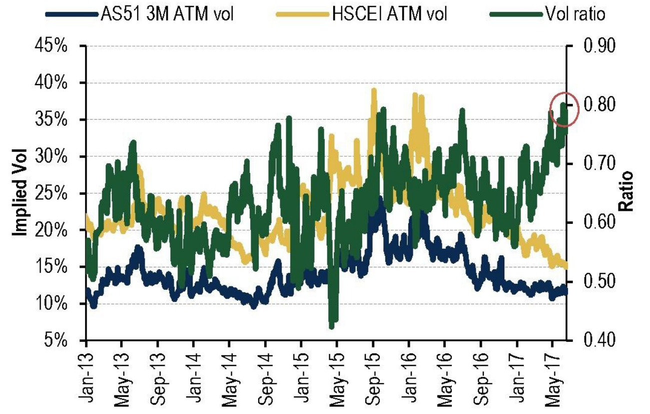
Japanese government bond (JGB) yield has been on a downward trend over the last few years and has negatively impacted bank earnings. As the Topix has higher weightings in banks than the Nikkei, the NKY/TPX ratio has been grinding higher.

However, the NKY/TPX ratio appears to have flattened out since the BoJ's commitment to maintain the 10-year JGB yield at around 0% in September 2016. With global central banks increasingly advocating tighter monetary policies, the market may start to speculate BoJ's exit strategy and this may reverse NKY/TPX's upward trend. With TPX vol trading below NKY vol, buying TPX calls funded by NKY calls may perform well in such a scenario.

AS51 3M ATM IV over HSCEI is at its 4-year high

Table 4 lists Asian index pairs with the highest IV ratio vs their 4-year histories. For instance, the ratio of AS51 3M ATM IV over HSCEI is at its 4-year high.

Chart 29: The ratio of AS51 3M ATM IV over HSCEI is at its 4-yr high (Daily data from 1-Oct-12 through 16-Jun-17)



Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research

Table 8: Index pairs^ with the highest implied vol ratio vs their histories (data as of 16-Jun-17)

	Index A (Implied vol)	Index B (Implied Vol)	A/B Implied Vol ratio	Ratio 4-yr percentile
3M ATM	AS51 (11.8%)	HSCEI (15.0%)	0.79	100%
6M ATM	KOSPI2 (13.2%)	HSCEI (17.1%)	0.77	98%
12M ATM	KOSPI2 (14.6%)	NIFTY (14.0%)	1.04	98%
3M 25d-Put	AS51 (13.8%)	HSCEI (16.3%)	0.85	99%
6M 25d-Put	KOSPI2 (14.4%)	HSCEI (18.7%)	0.77	98%
12M 25d-Put	KOSPI2 (16.0%)	HSCEI (20.5%)	0.78	99%
3M 25d-Call	AS51 (10.9%)	HSCEI (15.0%)	0.73	99%
6M 25d-Call	KOSPI2 (12.8%)	NKY (14.4%)	0.89	98%
12M 25d-Call	KOSPI2 (14.2%)	NIFTY (12.2%)	1.16	98%

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research

^ Index universe includes the ASX200, HSCEI, HSI, KOSPI2, NIFTY, NKY, TWSE, SPX and SX5E

* mid level implied vol

Summary of Open Trades (19-Jun-17)

Price data for open level reflects the price on open date and does not necessarily reflect the price at which the trade could be executed at the date of this report. Our trades are structured to be executed on the open date and are not necessarily appropriate to execute as formulated beyond that date.

Table 9: Summary of open trades as of 19-Jun-17

Trade Description	Open Date	Open Level	Expected Trade Term	Rationale
Long SX5E vs short SPX Dec18 var swap	5-Jul-16	6.1 vols	Dec-18 expiry	Investors should re-assess attractiveness of popular and (typically) technically motivated longer-dated RV vol trades, given environment of structurally higher political & economic risks and increasingly limited policy options
Long NKY vs short SPX Dec18 var swap	5-Jul-16	5.7 vols		
Long SX5E vs short SPX Dec18 put vs put	5-Jul-16	0.00%		
Buy a 1Y ATM worst-of call on SPX & TLT	18-Jul-16	0.9%	1 year	Cheap equity upside in a bond / equity melt-up
Buy SPX>UKX Jun17 ATM outperformance call, conditioned on SPX lower at maturity (qUSD)	17-Oct-16	2.0%	Jun-17 expiry	Risks of a hard Brexit rising and (weak) currency tailwind likely to prove short-lived; position cheaply for FTSE 100 (UKX) underperformance
Buy UKX Jun17 6650 put, sell SPX Jun17 1850 put	17-Oct-16	2.6%	Jun-17 expiry	
Buy an SX5E Sep-17 95% put conditional on EUR 10Y CMS > 1.1% or < 0.3% in Mar-17	14-Nov-16	2.7%	Sep-17 expiry	Remain long equities and cheapen hedges by conditioning on rates
Buy 2823 HK Jun-17 90/110 strangle	21-Nov-16	5.55%	Jun-17 expiry	China risk premium rising but A-shares vol still at all-time lows
Buy ESTX50 Dec17 90% put contingent on EURGBP < 0.82 by Jun17 expiry	2-Dec-16	1.63%	Dec-17 expiry	Equity-FX correlation is not priced for a spillover of populism into the EU, which could cause EUR to fall against an already weakened GBP as equities fall
Buy SPX>UKX Jun17 5% outperformance call (qUSD)	2-Dec-16	2.05%	Jun-17 expiry	UKX is heavily exposed to EU (50% revenues) and should underperform SPX if GBP tailwind fades. Volatility & correlation suit well for outperformance
Long XLF vs SX7E Jun17 ATM outperf call, contingent on SX7E higher at Jun expiry (qEUR)	2-Dec-16	1.20%	Jun-17 expiry	Cheapen long XLF upside to near 8y lows via selling upside on structurally challenged European banks & relatively more bearish outlook for US rates vs EU
Buy NKY Jun17 110% Call	02-Dec-16	1.83%	Jun-17 expiry	USDJPY and NKY the biggest beneficiaries of a Trump win
Buy TPINSU Jun17 110-125% Call Spread	02-Dec-16	3.30%	Jun-17 expiry	Banks and Insurance are the most leveraged sector
Buy TPNBNK Jun17 110-125% Call Spread	02-Dec-16	3.20%	Jun-17 expiry	Banks and Insurance are the most leveraged sector
Buy 2823 HK Jun17 90/110% strangle	02-Dec-16	5.90%	Jun-17 expiry	China risk premium rising but A-shares vol still at all-time lows
Buy HSCEI Jun17 105-120% call spread contingent on $KRW >1200	02-Dec-16	1.20%	Jun-17 expiry	Own contrarian EM upside at low cost & limited risk
Buy NKY-SPX Dec19 70/110% corridor variance	02-Dec-16	1.50%	Dec-19 expiry	QE uncertainty and USDJPY vol support NKY vs SPX realized vol
Buy NKY Jun17-Jun18 18,500 strike FVA	02-Dec-16	21.5%	Jun-17 expiry	What if QE hits its limit? Long NKY vol outright which is cheap to carry
Long Russell 2000 vs. short S&P 500 Dec-18 var spread	5-Dec-16	3.9pts	Dec-18 expiry	With fiscal stimulus and potential tax cuts, small caps revert to old normal generating higher vol on upside and downside relative to large caps
Buy 1x Jun17 64 call on Aug17 Brent futures, sell 1x SXEP Jun17 330 call	9-Jan-17	1.00%	Jun-17 expiry	Vol and price technicals are attractive. BofAML commodity strategists oil target is $70/bbl but this is already priced in SXEP levels according to BofAML Oil & Gas equity analysts
Buy SPX 6m ATM call contingent on GLD 5% higher in 3m	23-Jan-17	1%	Jul-17 expiry	Position for a near-term wobble followed by yet another equity melt up
Long NKY - SPX Dec-18 corridor var replication	13-Feb-17	4.00%	Dec-18 expiry	Cheaply access positive carry QE failure hedge
Buy NDX Top20 volatility dispersion	27-Feb-17	17.0%	Jan-18 expiry	
Long 1.8x vega on 1y single stock vols of UK Brexit exposed names, Short 1x vega on 1y FTSE index vol	14-Mar-17	32.3vols	14-Mar-18	Position for a pick-up in single stock realised vol on the 10 names (within FTSE's top 30) where post EU referendum realised vol was the highest relative to current 1y ATMf vol. The 10 names are: Barclays, Aviva, Prudential, BT, Glencore, Tesco, CRH, BA, Standard Chartered & HSBC.
SPX Sep-17 95% puts conditional on the 5yr CMS rate above 2.4% at maturity	14-Mar-17	1%	Sep-17, expiry	Hedge portfolios against a buy-the-dip failure should a faster rate cycle ultimately jeopardize it
Buy Buy-Rated MSCI A-shares stocks & hedge with puts	23-Mar-17	1.44%	Jun-17 expiry	Market may trade on the MSCI inclusion theme; Hedge with 2823 HK Jun17 95% put
Buy A-shares with highest MSCI impact & hedge with put	23-Mar-17	1.44%	Jun-17 expiry	Market may trade on the MSCI inclusion theme; Hedge with 2823 HK Jun17 95% put
Own Japan stock vol via gamma weighted vol dispersion	10-Apr-17	15.8%	Mar18 expiry	Historically attractive to own TOPIX Top 10 corridor gamma weighted volatility dispersion
Buy CNOOC Jul-17 95% puts vs. sell HSCEI 95% puts	24-Apr-17	0.77%	Jul17 expiry	Hedge a rollover in China GDP and screen for cyclicals that could face pressure
Buy CH Merchant Bk Jul-17 18.5/17 put spread vs 22 call	24-Apr-17	0.10%	Jul17 expiry	Hedge a rollover in China GDP and screen for cyclicals that could face pressure
Buy SX5E Dec17 3800 calls contingent on EURUSD > 1.1 at expiry	8-May-17	1.3%	Dec17 expiry	Benefit from low vol, flat correl, likely hawkish ECB & (FX un-hedged) inflows into EU equities
Buy 1.5x KOSPI2 285 puts vs. short 1x $KRW 1160 call	8-May-17	0.3%	Jul17 expiry	Leverage inexpensive equity vs. FX vols to own cheap tail protection
Buy EEM Aug17 39.5 put and sell EEM Aug17 37 put	15-May-17	1.6%	Aug17, expiry	Buy inexpensive EM equity puts on near-record performance gap to commodities
Buy Dec17 105% call on an equally weighted basket of SX7E, SXAP, SXPP & SXEP, sell Dec17 ATM worst-of call on the same	15-May-17	1.6%	Dec17 expiry	Monetise low vol & high implied correl to position for greater sector dispersion in EU: long basket call, short worst-of call
Buy NKY Jul-17 19500 puts vs. short Dec-17 17500 puts	15-May-17	0.0%	Jul17 expiry	Own inexpensive NKY hedges into FOMC; Term structure is too steep is under-pricing risks
Short GILD $55-$62.5-$67.5 put spread collar	16-May-17	1.5%	Sep-17 expiry	Buy out-of-favour and inexpensive biotech upside by levering depressed vol & skew
Long 1x EEM 3m 97.5% put vs. short ~0.09x units each of 3m 97.5% puts on FXI, EWY, EWZ, EPI, EWT, RSX, EZA, and EWW	1.5%	0.0%	3m	Buy EEM puts financed by a basket of EM puts to lever near record low correl
Buy Tencent Jul17 250/300 strangle	22-May-17	2.45%	Jul-17 expiry	Hedge a potential China tech bubble; Tencent potentially volatile after a 45% rally YTD
Buy A-shares (2823 HK) Jul17 105% call	22-May-17	1.15%	Jul-17 expiry	Hedge the upside into MSCI announcement on 20-Jun
Buy 1x contract of ESTX50 Jun17 3525, sell 4x contracts of V2X Aug future	22-May-17	1.00%	Jun-17 expiry	Fundamental case to be long EU equities remains intact but stretched bullish positioning could lead to near-term consolidation
Buy SX5E Dec17 3450-3700 bullish risk reversal vs short IBOXX HY TRS with equal notional sizing	30-May-17	1.17%	Dec-17 expiry	BofAML Equity & Credit strategists highlight they favour equities over HY credit as div yields have surpassed HY credit yield & equities offer more gearing to rising PMI's, earnings and FCF

Table 9: Summary of open trades as of 19-Jun-17

Trade Description	Open Date	Open Level	Expected Trade Term	Rationale
Buy 6m ATM calls on FB, AMZN, NFLX and GOOGL	30-May-17	6.9% (FB), 7.2% (AMZN), 9.4% (NFLX), 6.2% (GOOGL)	6m	Stock replace FANG stocks
Buy a 6m outperformance call on FANG stocks vs. SPX conditional on SPX> current levels at expiry	30-May-17	3.4%	6m	Lever extremely depressed FANG volatility and low correlation to buy upside
Buy HSI Sep17 90% put, sell ASX200 Sep-17 90% put	30-May-17	0.15%	Sep-17 expiry	HSI is unlikely to outperform if AS51 drops more than 10%; HSI vol below AS51 vol
Buy 14-Sep-17 best-of 95% put on NKY/KOSPI2/HSI	05-Jun-17	0.80%	Sep-17 expiry	Buy best-of puts to hedge a reversal in rally with the low vol and correlation environment
Buy SPX Top50 volatility dispersion	05-Jun-17	16.6%	Jun-18 expiry	Position for a potential bubble in Tech
Buy XLF 24 call, sell QQQ 139 call	12-Jun-17	0.01%	Jul-17 expiry	Rotate out of Growth into Value
Buy NKY-KOSPI2 Dec-17 90/110 strangle spreads	12-Jun-17	3.50%	Dec-17 expiry	We think the technically depressed NKY-KOSPI2 volatility spread will normalize
Buy NKY Sep17 19000-17500 put spread	12-Jun-17	0.93%	Sep-17 expiry	NKY put spread may offer even better value in hedging against a "mini TARP moment"

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Prices reflective of most recently available data which may be delayed in some cases. “Trade Value” represents current valuation of trades initiated on the “Open Date”.

Summary of Closed Trades (19-Jun-17)

Table 10: Summary of closed trades as of 19-Jun-17

Trade Description	Open Date	Open Level	Close Level	Close Date	Rationale
Buy NKY Aug-16 105%-110% call spreads & sell 90% puts	11-Jul-16	0.26%	1.73%	25-Jul-16	Close position as the hurdle to surprise on the upside is high following a 5.8% NKY rally
Replace FB long positions via Oct-16 ATM calls	25-Jul-16	5.9%	6.1%	1-Aug-16	Close position as Facebook rallied on better-than expected Q2 results
Replace AMZN long positions via Oct-16 ATM calls	25-Jul-16	5.5%	6.3%	1-Aug-16	Close position as Amazon rallied on better-than expected Q2 results
Buy AAPL Oct-16 ATM protective puts	25-Jul-16	4.6%	1.2%	1-Aug-16	Remove protection as worries around disappointing Q4 guidance faded post earnings
Buy 1.5x 5-Aug-16 2950-3000 strangles by selling 1x 19-Aug-16 2950-3000 strangles	25-Jul-16	0.00%	-1.12%	5-Aug-16	The BoJ, Fed & EU bank stress tests could move mkts sharply in the near term
Sell NKY Aug16 15500 puts, Buy Sep16 15500-14500 put spreads	25-Jul-16	0.24%	0.28%	Aug-16 expiry & Sep-16 expiry	Unwinding before the Aug16 expiry; The NKY Sep put spread has carried well
Buy TLS 25-Aug16 95% puts	18-Jul-16	1.05%	2.95%	15-Aug-16	Telstra has announced earnings and the stock has corrected 5% over the period
Buy Newcrest 25-Aug-16 105/115% call spreads	18-Jul-16	2.64%	1.18%	15-Aug-16	NCM has stayed unchanged over the period despite better than expected earnings
Buy CSL 25-Aug-16 95% puts	18-Jul-16	1.09%	1.18%	22-Aug-16	CSL fell 5.4% over the period with weak earnings announcement
Buy BHP 25-Aug-16 105/115% call spreads	18-Jul-16	2.22%	0.77%	22-Aug-16	BHP rose 3.6% over the period but the option remains out of the money
Buy HSCEI Aug16 9400 call, Short Oct16 10000 call	1-Aug-16	0.00%	0.67%	22-Aug-16	Close position as the HSCEI rallies 5.2% and we are approaching the Aug16 expiry
Buy Tencent (700 HK) Sep16 105% call	15-Aug-16	1.70%	2.70%	22-Aug-16	Tencent jumped post better than expected earnings
Sell 1x SX7E 1M 25d call to fully finance 1.85x SX5E 1M 25d calls	25-Jul-16	0.0%	0.0%	25-Aug-16	SX7E 1M 25d call / SX5E 1M 25d call price ratio is in the 100th 2-yr percentile
Buy CMB (3968 HK) Sep16 105-115% call spread	5-Jul-16	2.32%	6.12%	30-Aug-16	Close position and BofA ML turned neutral in EM in the short-term
Buy ICBC (1398 HK) Sep16 105-115% call spread	5-Jul-16	2.12%	9.0%	30-Aug-16	Close position and BofA ML turned neutral in EM in the short-term
Buy BOC (3988 HK) Sep16 105-115% call spread	5-Jul-16	2.10%	6.28%	30-Aug-16	Close position and BofA ML turned neutral in EM in the short-term
Buy XLF Sep 24 strike call	25-Jul-16	1.4%	2.3%	6-Sep-16	Close positions from trades that have benefited thus far from the rally in Financials and weakness in Utilities; monetize view that Fed will not hike in September
Buy XLU Sep 51 strike put	25-Jul-16	1.3%	2.6%	6-Sep-16	
Buy a 6M ATM worst-of {XLF call, XLU put}	25-Jul-16	1.35%	3.0%	6-Sep-16	
Buy 0.85x SX5E Sep16 3000-3100 strangle, sell 1x SX5E Dec16 3000-3100 strangle	15-Aug-16	-5.07%	-5.73%	Sep-16 expiry	Take advantage of low near term vol and a steep term structure
Long 0.5x V2X Oct16 future, short 0.5x V2X Jan-17 future	11-Jul-16	0.05 vols	-0.95 vols	19-Sep-16	Unwind Oct/Jan spread and maintain Nov/Jan spread given clarity around the Italian referendum date
Sell VSTOXX Sep 21 puts	30-Aug-16	1.20 vols	1.77 vols	Sep-16 expiry	Global macro event risk likely to keep V2X supported going into Sep expiry
VIX Sep 17/22 1x2 call ratios (short 2x) + 0.75x SPY Sep23 210 puts	15-Aug-16	$0.85	$0.45	Sep VIX expiry	Trade provided hedging benefits during the sudden Sep market shock & has expired
Buy NKY Oct 95/105 strangle outright	30-Aug-16	2.28%	0.44%	27-Sep-16	Take a loss post an disappointing market reaction on the BoJ announcement
Buy NKY Oct 95/105 strangle daily delta-hedging	30-Aug-16	2.28%	0.56%	27-Sep-16	Take a loss post an disappointing market reaction on the BoJ announcement
Long 3M 25d EFA put vs short 3M 25d UKX put	5-Jul-16	0.00%	0.00%	3 months	Trade expired on 3-Oct
Replace T long position via 3M ATM calls	19-Jul-16	2.72%	0.04%	3 months	Our analysts no longer expect impactful catalysts in the near term; stock replacement strategies proved useful in cushioning downside losses during the abrupt Sep-16 sell-off vs. long equity positions.
Replace LOW long position via 3M ATM calls	19-Jul-16	3.90%	0.00%	3 months	
Replace RTN long position via 3M ATM calls	19-Jul-16	3.16%	0.41%	3 months	
Replace CRM long position via 3M ATM calls	19-Jul-16	4.16%	0.19%	3 months	
Replace NEE long position via 3M ATM calls	19-Jul-16	2.32%	0.08%	3 months	
Overlay long WBA long position with 3M ATM calls	19-Jul-16	4.04%	1.20%	3 months	
Buy HKEx (388 HK) 1x2 105%-115% call ratio	15-Aug-16	0.60%	0.00%	29-Sep-16	HKEx failed to rally above the first call strike and expired worthless
Buy NKY Oct16 17500 call, Sell 0.65x NKY Sep 17250 call	8-Aug-16	0.70%	0%	14-Oct-16	NKY Oct-16 call expired out of the money
Short VIX Oct 15 put vs. long VIX Nov 19/26 call spread	1-Aug-16	$0.45	$0.88	14-Oct-16	Close position as the Oct VIX future stayed well-supported as is typically the case in the weeks leading up to the US presidential election
Long 2x SPX Oct31 2125 puts vs. short 1x SPX Mar-17 1975 put	6-Sep-16	0.0%	-0.34%	14-Oct-16	Provided hedging benefits in the sudden equity shock in early Sep-16; now being unwound to mitigate decay
DAX +2.31x Dec16 / -1x Dec17 put calendars	30-Aug16	0.00%	-2.60%	Dec-16 expiry	DAX outperformance & low short dated DAX vol make put calendars attractive
Buy SX5E Dec16 2950/2750 put spread	6-Sep-16	1.48%	0.00%	Dec-16 expiry	A catalyst-strewn fall and a remarkably low volatility summer suggests that there could be headwinds to continued market upside on low volatility
Buy 1.5x SX5E Dec16 3100 call, sell 1x SX5E Mar17 3100 call for an upfront credit of 56bps	24-Oct-16	-0.56%	1.62%	Dec-16 expiry	Monetise steep SX5E vol curve for tactical EU upside with an upfront credit
Buy a 6M ATM worst-of call on XLP & GLD	11-Jul-16	1.05%	0.0%	6 months	Take a loss as safe-haven assets post a weak performance in H2-16 with fears over Trump's surprise victory easing and stock markets rallying
Buy a 6M ATM worst-of {SPX put, GLD call}	11-Jul-16	1.60%	0.0%	6 months	
Buy GLD 124/130 Dec-16 call spread	8-Nov-16	0.9%	0.0%	Dec-16	
Buy GLD 116/124/130 Dec-16 call spread collar	8-Nov-16	0.65%	-7.4%	Dec-16	
Buy TLT 123/132/137 Dec-16 call spread collar	8-Nov-16	0.67%	-5.03%	Dec-16	
Buy Oct16 110%f calls on VIE FP, AI FP, IBE SQ, STAN LN and MUV2 GY	18-Jul-16	2.37%	3.30%	Oct-16 expiry	Add exposure via inexpensive upside on single names where positioning appears particularly bearish and stocks have underperformed vs. their sectors
Buy an Oct16 110%F call on an equally weighted basket (quanto EUR)	18-Jul-16	0.81%	0.00%	Oct-16 expiry	
Buy 0.895x V2X Oct 21 puts, sell 1x VIX Oct 16 puts	19-Sep-16	0.0	$1.3	Oct-16 expiry	Near term catalysts & curve differentials favour tactical long V2X, short VIX puts
Sell SX7E Dec16 115 call	6-Sep-16	-0.88%	-1.09%	24-Oct-16	Close short SX7E call (part of SX5E put spread, short SX7E call trade) to limit potential risk from a "Yes" in the Italian referendum

Table 10: Summary of closed trades as of 19-Jun-17

Trade Description	Open Date	Open Level	Close Level	Close Date	Rationale
Buy HSI Oct-16 102% call, Sell HSP 105% call	19-Sep-16	0.60%	0.00%	28-Oct-16	HSP has under-performed HSI by 1.8% but both options expire out-of-the money
Short 1x USO 3M 25d put, long 2.1x SXEP 3M 25d call	8-Aug-16	0.00%	0.00%	4-Nov-16	The number of long SXEP calls per short USO put is historically high. Leverage commodity and equity strategists' views on oil and the Oil & Gas sector
Sell Dec16 SXDP 635 puts, buy 0.6x Dec16 SX7E 110 calls	7-Nov-16	0.00%	1.23%	11-Nov-16	Tactical option trade ahead of US elections
Long 0.5x V2X Nov16 future, short 0.5x V2X Jan-17 future	11-Jul-16	0.20 vols	-1.19 vols	Nov-16 expiry	Hedge further Brexit fallout, Italian bank & referendum risk.
Buy NIFTY Nov16 95/105 strangle outright	6-Sep-16	1.63%	6.36%	21-Nov-16	Close position as NIFTY has fallen 11.4% and we are approaching the expiry
Buy H-shares w/ SZ-A & buy HSCEI Dec16 put	22-Aug-16	1.90%	8.72%	5-Dec-16	Close position as the Shenzhen HK connect has launched on 5-Dec-16
Buy HK small-cap & buy HSCEI Dec16 put	22-Aug-16	1.90%	6.76%	5-Dec-16	Close position as the Shenzhen HK connect has launched on 5-Dec-16
Buy 1.32x EFA US 3M 25d put, sell 1x SX5E 3M 25d put for near 0 upfront premium	22-Aug-16	0.04%	0.00%	22-Nov-16	Own EFA puts vs ESTX50 puts to benefit from any increase in quantitative failure risk in Japan and post-Brexit uncertainty
Buy 2.6x SX5E 3M 110% call, sell 1x SX5E 3M 90% put for near 0 upfront premium	22-Aug-16	-0.04%	0.00%	22-Nov-16	Low vol, high skew combo makes ESTX50 levered riskies attractive
Sell 1M 95%f SX5E put and buy 1M 105%f SX5E call	31-Oct-16	-0.40%	0.00%	1-Dec-16	Generate income in range-bound markets, benefiting from high ESTX50 skew
Buy KOSPI2 Dec16 95% put, sell $KRW 97.4% put	17-Oct-16	0.00%	0.00%	8-Dec-16	Both legs expire out-of-the money at expiry
Buy HSCEI Dec16 95% put, sell 2822 HK 94.8% put	12-Sep-16	0.00%	0.00%	29-Dec-16	Both legs expire out-of-the money
Buy HSCEI Dec-16 105-115% call spread	27-Sep-16	1.82%	0.00%	29-Dec-16	HSCEI call spread expires out-of-the money
Buy CH Banks Dec-16 105-115% call spread	27-Sep-16	2.05%	0.00%	29-Dec-16	Chinese Banks call spread expires out-of-the money
Buy Best-of TWSE,KOSPI2,HSCEI Dec16 95% put	10-Oct-16	0.90%	0.00%	29-Dec-16	The best performing index (KOSPI2) fell less than 5% over the period
Buy HSCEI Dec16 9800 call with a 10600 knock-out	7-Nov-16	1.00%	0.00%	29-Dec-16	HSCEI knock-out call expires out-of-the money
Sell Samsung Jan17 90% put, buy KOSPI2 96% put	17-Oct-16	0.00%	0.00%	12-Jan-17	Both legs expire out-of-the money. The relative value trade has a zero profit & loss
Buy an XOP Jan-17 45 call	22-Aug-16	1.4%	0.00%	20-Jan-17	Call expired out-of-the money at expiry
Buy an XLE Jan-17 ATM call with 115% knock-in	22-Aug-16	2.5%	0.0%	20-Jan-17	Call expires in-the-money but the barrier was not breached at expiry
Buy an XLE over SPX Jan-17 ATM outperformance call contingent on SPX up at expiry	22-Aug-16	2.3%	3.4%	20-Jan-17	Energy equity outperformed the overall equity market while both were up by the time the outperformance call expired
Buy XLP Jan-17 52 / 49 put spread	19-Sep-16	1.4%	0.00%	Jan-17 expiry	Both legs expire out-of-the money
Buy a 6M ATM best-of put on SPX & TLT	18-Jul-16	0.8%	0.00%	6 months	Put expired out-of-the money as the S&P500 ended
Buy LLY Jan-17 80/90 1x2 CS	17-Oct-16	1.8%	0.00%	Jan-17 expiry	Both legs expire out-of-the money
Buy LLY Jan-17 80/85 CS with 90 KI on upper leg	17-Oct-16	2.4%	0.00%	Jan-17 expiry	Both legs expire out-of-the money
Buy ZTS Jan-17 46/50 bullish risk reversal	17-Oct-16	2.6%	7.4%	Jan-17 expiry	Both legs expire in-of-the money
Buy ZTS Jan-17 46/50/55 call spread collar	17-Oct-16	1.4%	7.4%	Jan-17 expiry	The 46 call and 50 call expire in-the-money
Buy an EWZ Jan-17 40 call	24-Oct-16	3.1%	0.00%	Jan-17 expiry	Call expired out-of-the money at expiry
Buy TPINSU 105-120% call spread, short 85% put	14-Nov-16	1.75%	4.50%	13-Jan-17	Option expired and Topix Insurance rose 9.5% over the period
Buy TPNBNK 105-120% call spread, short 85% put	14-Nov-16	1.85%	10.60%	13-Jan-17	Option expired and Topix Banks rose 15.6% over the period
Buy HSBC Jan-17 105% call, Sell HSP 105% call	14-Nov-16	0.52%	4.98%	26-Jan-17	Option expired; HSBC out-performed HSP on the upside
Buy SX5E +Dec19/-Dec18 div future spread	4-Oct-16	€-7.0	€-4.2	6-Feb-17	Close position given sudden SX5E rally and Dec18 div future will lose equity beta
Own Nifty Mar17 call to position for budget surprise	23-Jan-17	0.67%	2.15%	6-Feb-17	Nifty was up 4.9% over the period on the back of a positive budget announcement
Buy HSI Feb17 23600 call	9-Jan-17	0.48%	1.09%	13-Feb-17	Close position. HSI was up 4.9% over the period
Buy AMP AU 23-Feb-17 95% puts	30-Jan-17	1.85%	0.27%	13-Feb-17	Unwind the put option post the earnings result
Buy SUN AU 23-Feb-17 95% puts	30-Jan-17	1.39%	0.08%	13-Feb-17	Unwind the put option post the earnings result
Buy 1x V2X Feb17 19 calls, sell 0.85x V2X Mar17 futures	17-Jan-17	-16.1v	-14.32v	Feb-17 expiry	Unwind as the Feb17 call expired
Buy CBA AU 23-Feb-17 95% puts	30-Jan-17	0.76%	0.00%	21-Feb-17	Unwind the put option post the earnings result
Overwrite WES AU 23-Feb-17 103% calls	30-Jan-17	-0.87%	-1.20%	21-Feb-17	Unwind the put option post the earnings result
Long V2X Apr future, short V2X May future	9-Jan-17	0.45	4.55	24-Feb-17	The Apr future has already richened significantly vs. the May future. Prefer V2X May long May call spread, short Apr put as a French election hedge instead.
Buy 1x ESTX50 Dec17 3250 calls, sell 1.23x EURJPY Dec-17 115 puts	5-Dec-16	0.00%	3.20%	24-Feb-17	Unwind ahead of French elections as political uncertainty can weigh on the EUR
Buy NKY Dec17 19500 call, short Mar17 18000 call	3-Oct-16	0.58%	-1.82%	3-Mar-17	Unwind the option before the Mar-17 expiry
Buy NKY Mar17-Dec17 17000 strike FVA	3-Oct-16	20.2%	21.6%	3-Mar-17	Unwind the option before the Mar-17 expiry
Buy TPNBNK Mar17 1x1.5 180/170 put ratio	9-Jan-17	0.60%	0.00%	10-Mar-17	Option expired out-of-the money as the TPNBNK remained range-bounded
Buy ESTX50 17-Mar-17 3350-3450 strangle	6-Mar-17	0.80%	0.00%	17-Mar-17	Expired out-of-the-money
Buy Volkswagen 2017 dividend future	17-Jan-17	€1.3	€2.0	14-Mar-17	Volkswagen announced a dividend of €2.05 on 14-Mar-17
Buy Mar17 UKX 6700 put cont. on GBPUSD<1.20	10-Oct-16	0.81%	0.0%	17-Mar-17	UKX rallied making the hedges expire out-of-the-money
Buy Mar17 UKX<6700 / GBPUSD<1.20 dual digital	10-Oct-16	9.1%	0.0%	17-Mar-17	
Mar17 UKX 6700 buy qUSD put, sell 0.9x vanilla put	10-Oct-16	0.44%	0.0%	17-Mar-17	
Buy 6M ATM worst-of {XLF call, XLU put}	19-Sep-16	1.38%	0%	17-Mar-17	While XLF has rallied ~30% since inception, XLU is higher by 4% and the XLU put is the worst performing option, expiring OTM
Buy an SPX Mar-17 97.5% put contingent on USO>105% at expiry	3-Oct-16	1.08%	0%	17-Mar-17	The structure offered a deep discount for an SPX hedge and expires OTM as markets have rallied strongly
Buy a USO Mar-17 105% call contingent on SPX<97.5% at expiry	3-Oct-16	1.70%	0%	17-Mar-17	The trade expires OTM due to the SPX rally and a sell off in oil over the past two weeks
Buy a Mar-17 SPX<97.5%, USO>105% dual digital	3-Oct-16	11.80%	0%	17-Mar-17	The trade expires OTM due to the SPX rally and a sell off in oil over the past two weeks
Buy an IWM Mar-17 ATM call conditional on EEM<95% at expiry	14-Nov-17	1.15%	0%	17-Mar-17	EEM has rallied 15% over the period together with IWM
Buy an XLI Mar-17 ATM call conditional on EEM<95% at expiry	14-Nov-17	0.89%	0%	17-Mar-17	EEM has rallied 15% over the period together with XLI
Buy GLD Mar-17 116 call, sell Jun-17 127 call	23-Jan-17	1%	0.31%	17-Mar-17	While GLD rallied strongly earlier in the life of the trade, it recently retreated at the time of expiry with GLD 87bps above the lower strike, the short call is worth 56bps

Table 10: Summary of closed trades as of 19-Jun-17

Trade Description	Open Date	Open Level	Close Level	Close Date	Rationale
Long 2x SPX Aug-17 2200 puts, short 1x SPX Aug-17 2350 put	21-Feb-17	0.10%	0.01%	17-Mar-17	SPX has traded range bound since inception of the trade, still the carry has been minimal, close out or roll the position
Own Nifty Mar17 strangle heading into 5 events	23-Jan-17	1.50%	3.96%	20-Mar-17	Unwind the option post the state election event and Close position
Long XLF Jun17 24 call, short SX7E Jun17 120 call	2-Dec-16	0.74%	-5.88%	27-Mar-17	The call vs call relative value trade is now riskier given the potential reversal in US reflation trades and the potential for European equities to rally in a French election market-favourable outcome.
Buy Tencent Mar-17 105% calls	27-Feb-17	1.15%	2.31%	27-Mar-17	Unwind the position for the Tencent earnings
Buy HSCEI Mar17 105% call contingent SPX <2200	24-Oct-16	1.20%	0.00%	30-Mar-17	Option expired; HSCEI was up 5.1% but the SPX ended above 2200
Buy HSCEI Mar17 9600 put vs short Sep17 8200 put	17-Jan-17	-0.05%	-0.78%	30-Mar-17	Unwind post Mar-17 expiry; the short Sep17 put helped reduce the hedging cost
Buy HSCEI Mar-17 1x1.5 10800-11200 call ratio	21-Feb-17	0.57%	0.00%	30-Mar-17	Option expired; HSCEI stayed flat and failed to rally above the 10800 call strike
Long SX5E Apr17 3300 call, short SX5E Dec17 3450 call	30-Jan-17	-0.60%	-0.18%	21-Apr-17	Apr17 option expired so we unwind the entire trade as planned
Short 1x SX5E May17 3350 calls, long 2x SX5E May17 3450 calls	21-Feb-17	0.00%	0.60%	24-Apr-17	Unwind before May expiry following the large 4% SX5E move on 24-Apr, given lack of near term catalysts
Buy an SPX Apr-17 95% put conditional on US 10Y CMS > 2.5% at maturity	14-Nov-16	0.78%	0%	21-Apr-17	In Nov-16, we recommended remaining long equities with cheap hedges. The hedge expires out of the money, while SPX has returned 8.7% for the period
Long SPX Apr17 2300 call, short SPX Dec17 2400 call	30-Jan-17	-0.80%	-0.71%	21-Apr-17	The reflation trade has slowed down and the market is in a holding pattern. The long Apr-17 call expires in-the-money, and the short Dec-17 call still has time value
Long VIX May 16 / 22 call spread vs. short VIX Apr 13 put	21-Feb-17	$0.35	$0.75	19-Apr-17	The call spread still has value due to elevated vol and vol-of-vol and we collect the premium on the expired short OTM put
Short SPX 21-Apr-17 vs. long 28-Apr-17 2325 straddle pair	6-Mar-17	0.50%	1.06%	21-Apr-17	The trade benefited from the rise in post-event volatility relative to pre-event volatility
Buy SX5E 28-Apr-17 3600 call	3-Apr-17	0.26%	0%	28-Apr-17	The option expired
Buy Unicom Apr17 105-115% call spread	21-Feb-17	1.65%	4.25%	27-Apr-17	Single stock option expired in-the-money despite a 1.4% decline in the HSCEI
Buy Sands China Apr17 105-115% call spread	21-Feb-17	2.00%	6.97%	27-Apr-17	Single stock option expired in-the-money despite a 1.4% decline in the HSCEI
Buy Galaxy Apr17 105-115% call spread	21-Feb-17	2.10%	10.0%	27-Apr-17	Single stock option expired in-the-money despite a 1.4% decline in the HSCEI
Buy SX5E Dec19 2500 put, sell SX5E Dec18 2500 put	27-Sep-16	3.97%	1.9%	8-May-17	SX5E has rallied 23.3% since we entered the trade and European political risk abated for now
Buy KOSPI2 May17 103% calls	13-Mar-17	0.63%	5.37%	8-May-17	Option expired; KOSPI2 rallied 8.37% over the period
Buy KOSPI2 May17 97/103% strangle	13-Mar-17	1.38%	5.37%	8-May-17	Option expired; KOSPI2 rallied 8.37% over the period
Buy NKY Jun17 20750 call, sell 1-1.3x 18750-17750 put ratio	06-Mar-17	0.00%	0.00%	15-May-17	Closing the trade post French election; option strikes remain far from the spot level
Long V2X May 26-32.5 call spread and short Apr 22 put	21-Feb-17	€0.20	€0.00	19-May-17	Expired
Buy 1x contract of SX5E May17 3550 call, sell 5x contracts of V2X May17 16 puts	3-Apr-17	0.0%	-1.63%	19-May-17	Expired
Long GLD May 123 call vs. short May 130 call	21-Feb-17	0.8%	0.00%	19-May-17	The hedge expired out-of-the-money as S&P 500 remained supported
Buy 1.5x EFA Jun17 103% call, sell 1x EFA May17 ATM call	6-Mar-17	-0.15%	-0.20%	19-May-17	EFA rallied strongly leading into the second round of the French elections but subsequently stalled
Buy SPX Top50 volatility dispersion	27-Feb-16	14.7%	11.5%	30-May-17	Expired
Long HSI vs. SPX May-17 90% put switch	06-Feb-17	0.07%	0.00%	29-May-17	Option expired; Both HSI and SPX puts expire out-of-the-money
Buy the Nifty May17 95/105% strangle outright	20-Mar-17	1.20%	0.00%	25-May-17	Option expired; Nifty failed to move more than the straddle huddle (5%)
Long HSBC May-17 65/70 call spread	3-Apr-17	0.95%	4.33%	29-May-17	Option expired; HSBC is up 6.75% on the back of a strong seasonal rally
Buy NKY Jun17 110% Call	02-Dec-16	1.83%	0.00%	9-Jun-17	Closing the trade on expiry; Japan market rallied but options remain out of the money
Buy TPINSU Jun17 110-125% Call Spread	02-Dec-16	3.30%	0.00%	9-Jun-17	Closing the trade on expiry; Japan market rallied but options remain out of the money
Buy TPNBNK Jun17 110-125% Call Spread	02-Dec-16	3.20%	0.00%	9-Jun-17	Closing the trade on expiry; Japan market rallied but options remain out of the money
Buy NKY Jun17-Jun18 18,500 strike FVA	02-Dec-16	21.5%	19.1%	9-Jun-17	Closing the trade on Jun17 expiry; Global volatility collapsed in 1H2017
Buy an EWZ Jun-17 40 call conditional on SPX<2200 at expiry	24-Oct-16	1.70%	0%	19-Jun-17	Recent political turmoil in Brazil surrounding Temer's presidency caused a slide in the Brazilian equity market and the BRL
Buy SPX Jun17 95% put contingent on US 5Y CMS > 2.15	5-Dec-16	1.04%	0%	19-Jun-17	In Dec-16, we recommended remaining long equities overlayed with cheap hedges. The hedge expires out of the money, while SPX has returned 10.2% for the period
Buy 1x Jun-17 ATM XLF call, sell 1.8x Jun-17 ATM worst-of calls on XLP and XLU	5-Dec-16	2.10%	-12.90%	19-Jun-17	Following the US election and the initial move in rates, XLF rallied and subsequently stalled. In the same period, the defensive sectors played the catch-up trade
Buy Jun-17 ATM R2K- value outperf call over EEM, contingent on EEM >95%	5-Dec-16	2.30%	0%	19-Jun-17	Concerns over US tax reform implementation caused small-caps to underperform relative to other equity markets, including EM
Buy QQQ Jun17 132 call , sell XLF Jun17 25 call	20-Mar-17	0.57%	4.73%	19-Jun-17	The trade captured the recent Tech sector outperformance in a period when Financials lagged driven by lower rates

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research. Prices reflective of most recently available data which may be delayed in some cases. "Trade Value" represents current valuation of trades initiated on the "Open Date".

Volatility in Numbers (16-Jun-17)

Table 11: Statistics on implied, realised, skew and term structure for 3-month and 12-month vols (developed markets)

	3-month							12-month						
	S&P500	**ESTX50**	**FTSE**	**DAX**	**NKY**	**HSI**	**KOSPI**	**S&P500**	**ESTX50**	**FTSE**	**DAX**	**NKY**	**HSI**	**KOSPI**
Implied	9.8%	13.4%	10.0%	12.6%	13.8%	12.4%	12.2%	14.0%	16.8%	13.6%	16.6%	17.2%	15.8%	14.6%
%tile (2yr)	1.2%	1.6%	0.6%	0.8%	0.4%	4.1%	19.9%	7.7%	5.6%	9.5%	5.5%	1.8%	6.3%	24.9%
1Week Change	-0.2%	0.3%	-0.4%	0.3%	-0.2%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	-0.1%	0.1%	-0.4%	0.0%	0.1%
1Mth Change	-0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.4%	-0.5%	-0.3%	-0.2%	0.1%	0.3%	0.6%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%
Realised	7.0%	11.4%	9.6%	10.7%	12.2%	10.2%	10.7%	9.5%	13.3%	12.2%	15.1%	19.6%	13.5%	11.4%
%tile (2yr)	11.5%	15.5%	15.6%	9.4%	0.6%	0.8%	21.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.8%	1.4%	20.7%
1Week Change	-0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	-0.3%	0.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-3.2%	-0.3%	-0.4%	-0.2%	0.1%	-0.1%
1Mth Change	0.4%	-0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	-0.2%	-0.5%	0.1%	0.0%	-3.8%	-0.7%	-1.0%	-0.4%	-0.5%	0.0%
Imp-real spread	2.7%	2.0%	0.4%	1.9%	1.6%	2.3%	1.5%	4.5%	3.5%	1.4%	1.5%	-2.3%	2.3%	3.1%
Spread %tile (2yr)	57.9%	55.7%	45.1%	57.2%	67.8%	71.3%	58.6%	91.5%	100.0%	85.2%	99.2%	61.6%	89.2%	70.8%
1Week Change	-0.1%	0.1%	-0.5%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%	0.1%	3.3%	0.2%	0.4%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.2%
1Mth Change	-0.6%	0.1%	-0.1%	-0.5%	-0.2%	0.2%	-0.2%	0.2%	4.1%	1.3%	1.2%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%
90-110 skew	8.5%	8.4%	6.2%	8.5%	5.8%	3.3%	3.8%							
%tile (2yr)	16.1%	71.8%	8.8%	66.7%	47.9%	17.8%	14.2%							
1Week Change	0.2%	0.9%	0.2%	0.7%	0.0%	0.9%	0.8%							
1Mth Change	0.5%	2.4%	1.2%	1.6%	0.2%	0.9%	0.9%							
	10-day realised							12M - 3M term vol spread						
	S&P500	**ESTX50**	**FTSE**	**DAX**	**NKY**	**HSI**	**KOSPI**	**S&P500**	**ESTX50**	**FTSE**	**DAX**	**NKY**	**HSI**	**KOSPI**
Current Level	3.2%	9.4%	8.3%	12.1%	7.1%	9.9%	10.6%	4.3%	3.4%	3.6%	3.9%	3.5%	3.4%	2.4%
%tile (2yr)	1.0%	16.3%	21.7%	26.3%	0.8%	15.5%	46.7%	99.8%	98.9%	99.6%	99.6%	98.9%	96.9%	79.5%
1Week Change	-1.5%	2.1%	1.2%	2.5%	-4.1%	4.6%	0.9%	0.3%	-0.2%	0.2%	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.2%
1Mth Change	-0.4%	0.9%	0.4%	5.2%	-5.8%	0.1%	-6.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%	0.4%	0.9%
	Cash index													
Current Level	2,433.15	3,543.88	7,463.54	12,752.73	19,943.26	25,626.49	306.79							
1Wk Change	0.06%	-1.18%	-0.85%	-0.49%	-0.35%	-1.55%	-0.84%							
1Mth Change	1.35%	-2.69%	-0.78%	-0.40%	0.12%	1.15%	2.38%							

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research

Table 12: Statistics on implied, realised, skew and term structure for 3-month and 12-month vols (emerging markets)

	3-month				12-month			
	EEM US	**IBOV**	**RDXUSD**	**TOP40**	**EEM US**	**IBOV**	**RDXUSD**	**TOP40**
Implied	15.6%	22.9%	25.9%	16.9%	19.2%	24.3%	26.7%	18.5%
%tile (2yr)	5.0%	31.7%	28.7%	15.6%	8.9%	39.2%	26.7%	9.2%
1Wk Change	0.5%	-1.7%	0.9%	1.2%	0.2%	-0.2%	0.5%	0.8%
1Mth Change	0.5%	1.8%	2.6%	1.9%	1.4%	2.0%	1.4%	0.5%
Realised	11.8%	25.3%	20.5%	11.0%	17.6%	22.5%	20.4%	14.9%
%tile (2yr)	0.2%	58.8%	20.8%	3.2%	8.5%	5.7%	0.0%	2.8%
1Wk Change	-1.2%	-0.6%	-1.1%	0.3%	-0.2%	-0.4%	-0.4%	0.1%
1Mth Change	-1.2%	6.6%	0.0%	-0.6%	-0.2%	1.5%	-0.9%	-0.2%
Imp-real spread	3.8%	-2.4%	5.4%	5.8%	1.6%	1.9%	6.3%	3.6%
Spread %tile (2yr)	85.5%	11.7%	71.7%	95.0%	65.5%	74.9%	99.0%	74.9%
1Wk Change	1.8%	-1.1%	2.0%	1.0%	0.5%	0.1%	1.0%	0.7%
1Mth Change	1.7%	-4.8%	2.7%	2.5%	1.6%	0.5%	2.3%	0.7%
90-110 skew	7.0%	5.9%	5.2%	8.0%				
%tile (2yr)	32.8%	68.4%	26.2%	35.4%				
1Wk Change	0.7%	0.8%	0.4%	0.4%				
1Mth Change	0.9%	0.4%	0.6%	1.3%				
	10-day realised				12M - 3M term vol spread			
	EEM US	**IBOV**	**RDXUSD**	**TOP40**	**EEM US**	**IBOV**	**RDXUSD**	**TOP40**
Current Level	8.1%	8.8%	17.0%	12.2%	3.6%	1.4%	0.9%	1.7%
%tile (2yr)	4.0%	0.2%	17.8%	26.3%	97.5%	80.5%	57.7%	46.2%
1Wk Change	-0.5%	-4.3%	-2.2%	0.8%	-0.3%	1.5%	-0.4%	-0.5%
1Mth Change	-3.9%	-8.1%	-2.7%	5.3%	1.0%	0.2%	-1.2%	-1.4%
	Cash index							
Current Level	41.22	61,626.41	1,136.99	44,512.15				
1Wk Change	-0.94%	-0.94%	-3.70%	-2.97%				
1Mth Change	-1.10%	-10.28%	-11.99%	-6.15%				

Source: BofA Merrill Lynch Global Research

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From: Weingarten, Reid [redacted]
Sent: 7/4/2017 4:46:06 PM
To: jeevacation@gmail.com
Subject: Fw: The new iterations of Ghislaine Maxwell

Importance: High

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, July 1, 2017 12:49 PM
To: [redacted] [redacted]
Cc: Ainbanklaw Info; [redacted] Denyse Sabagh;
[redacted] Michael Baxter;
[redacted]; Patrick M. Regan; [redacted] Robert Barnett; Weingarten, Reid;
[redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]
[redacted]; Ellen Kerns;
[redacted]
Subject: Re: The new iterations of Ghislaine Maxwell

We know of course that Saturdays are reserved for Matthew Horton.

On Saturday, July 1, 2017, 12:06:29 PM EDT, [redacted] wrote:

Rich Beckler,
Ken Adams,

Do you remember when I'd asked you what your daughters did for a living? Especially last night Mr. Beckler, as most Friday nights, no?

Yes, they are the new iterations of Ghislaine Maxwell; for you Richard Beckler, this originated from my being a former Stone Ridge classmate of his elder daughter Katie Beckler, and because he was on the Board of Stone Ridge during this period in time when my every family, friend, acquaintance and association was being contacted, bribed in one form or another, and turned against me (see below); as for Ken Adams, it stemmed from my having contacted him for representation in my 2011-filed case against IBM also during this period of time when my every communication were being tracked.

You both are interesting; you let us see what's to become of the Scalia 35 (see below; at bottom, Ghislaine Maxwell's Jeffrey Epstein in context.)

*

We start from this following precept: (the repeating 9/11s)

1. "Toward a New World Order" speech by Pres. George H.W. Bush – 9/11 (1990)

2. WTC Attack – 9/11 (2001)

3. BENGHAZI Attack – 9/11 (2012)

But you have to remember that H. W. Bush was planted:

AUTHOR PETER DALE SCOTT: Sometimes you have little deep events that most people don't even notice. One of those would be the Halloween Massacre. The older people remember the Saturday Night Massacre which happened under Nixon. I'm talking about the Halloween Massacre of October 31, 1975, and probably people watching this show have never heard of it.

That was under Ford, and Ford may have condoned it because it was trying to help restore his popularity. He was going way down in the polls. But it was a very important series of events all on the same night. The head of the CIA was fired, William Colby, replaced by a relatively unknown man called George H. W. Bush who then went on to authorize something that Colby had refused to authorize - the Team B report - the Team B to recalculate the Soviet threat and it was predetermined. They were going to find that it was much bigger than the professionals angled like Raymond [inaudible] that I mentioned.

They said Russia is less of a threat now than it used to be. Well, that was terrible news for the industrial complex so the Team B came in and said oh, no, no, no, it's much more of a threat than it used to be, and that's why we got this huge military build-up. It started actually under Carter but we think of it as the Reagan build-up, and that of course is a major factor in having ended the Soviet Union because the Soviet Union tried to match it with a weaker economy. And that arms race which was not about threats but was about fighting economic war, that was an arms race which you could say that the Soviet Union lost because they couldn't keep it up. Their economy went more and more downhill because they were deflecting resources away from vital domestic functions. But really I'm trying to talk here about the Halloween Massacre...

Just the change in the CIA was a major historical event but it wasn't very visible. The second thing that happened was they fired Jim Schlesinger as Secretary of Defense... It was being done by [President Ford's] Chief of Staff and his assistant who are two names barely known then but quite famous since. Chief of staff was Donald Rumsfeld and the assistant was Dick Cheney. And that was the first real intrusion of the Rumsfeld-Cheney team into American politics. And they became the real heart of what I consider the Deep State in the 1980s when they were planning for Continuity of Government which was a plan for emergency rules like warrantless surveillance and warrantless detention and the militarization of homeland security. All those things were planned all through the '80s - COG planning by Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney. Even when Rumsfeld wasn't in the government, he was authorized by Reagan to do this planning.

And why is that important to our history? Because in 2001, these two men were now in the government - Vice President and Secretary of Defense - the two top people in Washington on September the 11th, 2001 when Bush was down in Florida - George W. Bush - and what did they do on that day? They implemented the plans they had been planning for 20 years. Another major event in American history but it's not usually told that way.

We implemented - it's in the 9/11 Commission Report that COG plans were implemented on that day. This is a huge change in our country. We now have an ARMY command, NORTHCOM, to take charge of America - North America, the way SOUTHCOM is in charge of South America and CENTCOM is in charge of Central Asia.

This used to be illegal... We had the posse comitatus acts which said, yes, if there's a real emergency you could call up the ARMY to deal with the emergency, but you cannot do it on a permanent basis but we now do do it on a permanent basis. We haven't even bothered to repeal the posse comitatus. We are in a state of emergency that was declared on September the 14th, 2001. And it's still enforced. It has to be renewed every year. Obama did it every year just as George Bush renewed it every year.

What are the roots of this? Well there are the legitimate roots that go back to fear of an atomic decapitation of the government back in the Truman era, so legitimate COG planning goes back to Truman and Eisenhower, but the illegitimate use of COG to deal with any emergnecy you like, that goes to the Reagan administration and it really goes back to the [Halloween] Massacre where Rumsfeld and Cheney put their thumbprint on American politics for the first time.

-- interview of Peter Dale Scott, @ min. 32:00,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNqDAYWYFuQ&t=2433s

This all suggests that the start of the 9/11 agenda pre-dated him as well. I see now that there was a seemingly relevant 1990 event as well. "On September 11, 1970 -- a date that only took on haunting overtones with the attacks on New York and Washington in 2001 -- Nixon became the first U.S. president to try to protect air travelers from extremists who sensed gaping vulnerabilities in security for commercial airliners, issuing a statement listing a string of measures including the introduction of 100 air marshals on U.S. planes. "Most countries, including the United States, found effective means of dealing with piracy on the high seas a century and a half ago," Nixon said. "We can -- and we will -- deal effectively with piracy in the skies today."
The President had been jolted into action by the simultaneous hijackings of planes in Europe headed to the United States. Jets belonging to TWA, Pan Am and Swissair were seized by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The group also attempted to hijack a jet over London belonging to the Israeli airline El Al but was thwarted by security guards on board.
The Pan Am seizure ended quickly, but the passengers on the TWA and Swissair jets were diverted to a British air base in Jordan and the drama only ended after days of tense diplomacy, when the hostages were all released in a deal in which the Swiss, German, British and Israeli governments let Palestinian prisoners go." (http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/27/politics/terrorism-1970s-richard-nixon/index.html)

This 9/11 response sounds quite normal of course. But fast forward and the two secret service individuals chosen for an April 2001 interview by a PWC staff member on behalf of what becomthe IBM Center for the Business of Government were (1) Steve Colo who happened to be the head of the division at SAIC that falsely labeled me a threat and added my name to some sort of Do Not Admit list at the end of a 5 month temp assignment in 2005 into early 2006. The consequence of the SAIC designation for me was the following:

(I write) "The SAIC designation took advantage of a devilish stratagem in which as a national security employee (having filed out a SF-86 form, governed actually by the GSA - https://www.gsa.gov/portal/forms/download/116390 - for government clearance) working a designated contract in a classified facility, being designated a disturbance/dissident/threat to operations, makes one, in turn, a threat to national security - with all the surveillance/targeting that enables." In essence I was made an enemy of the State and was tracked, my family and friends turned, my opportunities seized to include the opportunity to rear family as demonstrated especially in the 2007 sabotage of my third trimester pregnancy and then the targeting and eventual capture of children I used to babysit - in 2011, they were predominantly tweens - to be used for sexual blackmail and other forms of leverage. The reason for the use of children in this barbaric way was to expend "ops" that were already in effect and had been used to control many of the politicians that have been allowed to rise to the top (see info on the Franklin Scandal for example), and similarly according to the laws of compromise, the following which has been recently developing into highly coordinated murder "ops":

(I write) "The progress that was made from the absorbing of my (small) network (and this through sources and methods - money and other pleasureful compensations given to those willing to participate in and/or coordinate violence against me and my loved ones to include children leading only to now their enabled targeting and the absorbing of whatever may be their networks - well, you see below (and this only the very tip of the iceberg) how many people they've been able to engulf and what advances have been made by the quite elaborate criminal class employing these tactics; and one also begins to better understand the events surrounding Justice Scalia's passing and what's to come for the 35 guests in Scalia's private party. As for Scalia's passing, it was decidedly suspicious as noted by William Ritchie: (The Washington Post prints) “As a former homicide commander, I am stunned that no autopsy was ordered for Justice Scalia,” William O. Ritchie, former head of criminal investigations for D.C. police, wrote in a post on Facebook on Sunday... Ritchie also raised questions about the marshals’ actions: “How can the Marshal say, without a thorough post mortem, that he was not injected with an illegal substance that would simulate a heart attack… Did the US Marshal check for petechial hemorrhage in his eyes or under his lips that would have suggested suffocation? Did the US Marshal smell his breath for any unusual odor that might suggest poisoning? My gut tells me there is something fishy going on in Texas.”

As for SAIC, the following also pertains:

(I write) "If you first see SAIC as what's called a systems integrator (author Tim Shorrock's phrase), and also the formerly married Bud and Sue Horton and their two grown sons Matthew Horton and Ben Lanier as aids of an implementation, you can better see the bigger picture:

(1) Sue Horton left IBM in early 2007-ish for an executive position at Tetra Tech which soon entered into joint venture with SAIC (Sue's employer prior to IBM, btw) on an enormous (billion dollar) 2011 Hillary Clinton State Department award (http://www.prnewswire.com/…/saic-tetra-tech-joint-venture-a…);

(2) that Bud Horton left IBM in early 2009-ish for an executive position at Accenture which soon thereafter entered into joint venture with SAIC spin-off Leidos, and Cerner, on an enormous (billion dollar) 2015 DoD award (http://www.healthcareitnews.com/…/dod-names-ehr-contract-wi…);

(3) that the Sue Horton contract was used to grow and fortify the Afghan heroin trade (as well as corrupt law enforcement) although the stated intention was of course the opposite... ("[SAIC and Tetra Tech's] joint venture, Integrated Justice Systems International, LLC (IJSI), has been awarded a contract to provide worldwide civilian police and criminal justice assistance to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)... [specifically} to provide INL with program management, criminal justice, and life and mission support to countries emerging from conflict or otherwise facing instability challenges. Under this new contract, IJSI will provide technical assistance, training, logistics and infrastructure services to support the Department of State's efforts to strengthen criminal justice systems in select partner countries.")... yet, just months shy of contract end, the NY Times reported: "Tasked With Combating Opium, Afghan Officials Profit From It;" "Penetrating Every Stage of Afghan Opium Chain, Taliban become a Cartel;" and "Corrupt Combatants Fight for Control of Lucrative Afghan Drug Trade;" see also here an overview of the growth of Afghan opium production from the start of the US occupation (2001) to the present, and especially from contract start (2011) to end (2016): http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-spoils-of-war-afghanist…/91;

(4) and that the award Bud Horton helped secure just as Sue's contract was coming to an end was not only born from what looks like Franklin Scandal compromises, but it is this contract that seems

intent on implementing bioterrorism as the new form of explosive terrorism."

(Note that both members of this family were awarded BILLION dollar contracts; that's quite exceptional, no?)

As for terrorism as an US industry, it's hardly better seen than through the following which is information of course we all know:

We note that in-between Bush #41's 9/11/1990 speech(with Dick Cheney as his Secretary of Defense) and the 9/11/2001 attack on the WTC were little more than Clinton's 8 years in the White House. We look also to The American Deep State by Peter Dale Scott for evidence of ties between the actions of the Clinton administration and (1) the 1993 attack on the WTC and (2) the 1998 attack on the US embassy in Nairobi, Kenya which demonstrate that the Clinton administration in no uncertain terms sponsored terrorism:

(Writes Scott) "The homicidal crime suggested by Fenton's meticulous research is one both difficult and painful to contemplate. It has to be considered in the light of the earlier instances of protection we have surveyed:

1. the protection given to Salameh and Abouhalima in the 1990 Kahane murder, leaving them free to participate in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing;

2. the failure for two or three years to process Ali Mohamed's documents seized in 1990, which could have prevented the 1993 World Trade Center bombing;

3. the release of Ali Mohamed from Royal Canadian Mounted Police detention in 1993, leaving him free to participate in the 1998 Nairobi Embassy bombing;

4. the treatment of Ali Mohamed as an "unindicted coconspirator" in the 1993 WTC bombing case and Landmarks case, leaving him free to participate in the 1998 Nairobi Embassy bombing.

(pp. 76-77, The American Deep State)

Scott had earlier examined these attacks in especial connection to the September 11, 2001 attack on the WTC:

(Writes Scott) "For indeed it is certain that on various occasions U.S. agencies have intervened, letting al-Qaeda terrorists proceed with their plots. This alarming statement will be dismissed by some as "conspiracy theory." Yet in this chapter, I will show that this claim doesn't to arise from theory, but from facts that are true, even though they have been systemically suppressed or under-reported in the American mainstream media. I am describing a phenomenon that occurred not just once, but repeatedly, almost predictably. We shall see that, among the al-Qaeda terrorists who were first protected and then continued their activities were the following:

1. Ali Mohamed, identified in the 9/11 Commission Report as the leader of the 1998 Nairobi Embassy bombing;

2. Mohammed Jamal Khalife, Osama bin Laden's close friend and, while in the Philippines, financier of both Ramzi Yousef (principal architect of the first World Trade Center [WTC] attack) and his uncle Khalid Sheikh Mohammed;

3. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, identified in the 9/11 Commission Report as "the principal architect of

the 9/11 attacks";

4. Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi, two of the alleged 9/11 hijackers, whose presence in the United States was concealed from the FBI by CIA officers for months before 9/11.

It might sound from these citations that the 9/11 Commission marked a new stage in the U.S. treatment of these terrorists, and that the report now exposed those terrorists who in the past had been protected. On the contrary, a principal purpose of my chapter is to show that

1. one purpose of protecting these individuals had been to protect a valued intelligence connection (the "al-Qaeda connection," if you will);
2. one major intention of the 9/11 Commission Report was to continue protecting this connection;
3. those on the 9/11 Commission staff who were charged with this protection included at least one commission member (Jamie Gorelick), one staff member (Dietrich Snell), and one important witness (Patrick Fitzgerald) who earlier had figured among the terrorists' protectors.

In the course of writing this chapter [Scott continues], I came to another disturbing conclusion I had not anticipated. This is that a central feature of the protection has been to defend the 9/11 Commission's false picture of al-Qaeda as an example of non-state terrorism, ignoring not just the CIA but also the royal families of Saudi Arabia and Qatar. In reality, as I shall show, royal family protection from Qatar and Saudi Arabia (concealed by the 9/11 Commission) was repeatedly given to key figures like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the alleged "principal architect of the 9/11 attacks." The establishment claims that the wars fought by America in Asia since 9/11 have been part of a global "war on terror." But this "war on terror" has been fought in alliance with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Pakistan - precisely the principal political and financial backers of the al-Qaedist networks the United States has supposedly been fighting. Meanwhile the most authentic opponents in the region of these Sunni al-Qaedists - the governments of Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Iran - have found themselves overthrown (in the case of Iraq and Libya), subverted with U.S. support (in the case of Syria), or sanctioned and threatened as part of an "axis of evil" (in the case of Iran). We should not forget that, just one day after 9/11, "Rumsfeld was talking about broadening the objectives of our response and 'getting Iraq.'"

(pp. 44-45, The American Deep State)

Clinton's daughter is now poised to work global health initiatives which I would suggest is little more than a cover for on-going terrorism "ops".

To return to Steve Colo - in the interview he speaks of a partnership between the Secret Service, the FBI, and South Carolina's SLED (State Law Enforcement Division) to open a Computer Crime Center. Bud Horton (mentioned above) (long-affiliated with IT Security; his title at Accenture was Chief technology officer of it's cyber security practice) happened to have just moved to South Carolina from Loudoun County after being implicated in a continuing child sex scandal (see details below). Further, cyber-crime just so happens to be another of the arenas in which our Intelligence Community coordinates with the Russians: "The US cooperates with the FSB and Russia's interior ministry on counter-terrorism, organized crime, bio-terrorism, and cyber-crime." -- p. 243, Expelled: A Journalist's Descent into the Russian Mafia State, by Luke Harding) Most would interpret this quote to suggest that the nations work together to prevent these various threats. The reality is more the opposite; trust me when I say that the US doesn't work "ops" alone - the 2005 London Bombings is one notable example of a instance in which the US coordinated with also British intelligence in the perpetration of an attack.) I just tweeted this morning actually the following in regards to US coordinations with the Russians: "One must know a renowned Rus mafiaso was granted entry https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vyacheslav_Ivankov#Moving_to_the_United_States … be4 the real story of today's US-Rus relations is slowly known" in response to the following comment @turndeaux: Peter Dale Scott, who writes about the Deep State, says Russia issue is "a bona fide security issue, not a diversion".

About Bud Horton and the Loudoun County matter - in attempts to make a long story short, the following email chain:

On Monday, June 26, 2017 10:57 AM, [redacted] wrote:

Sheriff Chapman,
Loudoun Count, VA

Did you ever consider that Loudoun was a target? That your community was induced to walk it's own children down the plank as compensation for what Loudoun had done to the young Dima Yakovlev? Because now child exploitation is deeply embedded within your community with your own people (your own police, your own prosecutors, your own public defenders and private attorneys) protecting this very system that will be used to take the futures of your Loudoun children (see more of the details below). Is it possible that that's how this happened, and you saw it not unfolding before your eyes? Or was it simply money and just another good enough justification?

Forwarded Message

On Monday, June 26, 2017 10:24 AM, [redacted] wrote:

Changeis,

You reported in May of 2014 that you hired Bob Richel formerly of the DEA as Vice President of Corporate Development. In an April 2014 interview by the Loudoun County Police (those in the mouth of the lion but not quite aware of it yet but to have foreseen the ways in which the 2008 death of the Russian born 21 month-old Dima Yakovlev (renamed Chase Harrison by his Purcellville, VA adoptive parents) would have been used as "justification" for a (quite profitable) counter-offensive...) of Henry "Bud" Horton (characterized by Loudoun County as a "victim" of the recent "False statement to Law Enforcement Officer (LEO)" of him sexually exploiting the 15 year-old Anjulee Gunther), Henry "Bud" Horton named Bob Rachel as one of the DEA guys he used to work with. This takes on unusual significance in light of the below, no?

(How lovely, by the way, this following information and the ways in which it helps us understand many of the hidden influences: "Halliburton is also involved with the Russian mob. They're got sort of two things going on. One is oil and the other is drug trafficking. Halliburton is a story all by itself." (says Stan Goff, http://narconews.com/goffmccormick1.html))

On Saturday, June 24, 2017 2:43 PM, [redacted] wrote:

Mr. Satz,
State's Attorney, Broward County, Fl

I'm forwarding the below information as it pertains to Mrs. Lesley Simms and more importantly the ones with whom she continues to coordinate.

As you may know, she was once close with an individual named Matthew Horton with whom she attended George Mason University, and through Matthew, Ms. Simms became well-acquainted with

Matthew's parents Henry "Bud" Horton and Sue Popovich Horton who helped secure her a position at IBM upon her graduation from GMU. Both of these latter individuals (Bud and Sue Horton) were involved in the 2007 murder of my son, and they in collusion with their son Matthew continue in the exploitation of children Anjulee and Xian Gunther. The powers that be intend now for these children to (continue to) follow in the footsteps of Ms. Simms, and to that end, I would advise that you become acquainted with (1) the ways in which Ms. Simms subsidized her law school education and off course (2) her current and related endeavors especially as they relate to drug trafficking and terror financing (see below email to Mr. Martin of the St. Augustine Record).

On Friday, June 23, 2017 8:36 AM, [redacted] wrote:

Mr. Martin,
St. Augustine Record

Quite an interesting article about the litigation between Deputy Banks and Rusty Rogers (see: Deputy Banks' attorney claims FDLE agent's credibility 'destroyed') It must also be explored, of course, that Officers Rodgers was once well respected for his investigation and exposure of a terrorist financing network that permeated the sunny state of Florida - (the NY Times reports) "Agent Rodgers joined the state's elite investigative unit, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, where he quickly earned agent-of-the-year honors — and a meeting with the governor — for helping dismantle a terrorist financing network that stretched from Florida to the Middle East" - and that terrorism is very much a well-protected U.S. industry (see below).

God forbid some poor should get away with disrupting the delicate state of secreted operations; as you yourself report, "As written in [Plaintiff Banks'] motion: "Defendant Rodgers' false, misleading and inconsistent testimony throughout the discovery process is so pervasive and extreme, and involves so many material issues, it has destroyed Defendant's credibility on all issues..." And here we see the "whole-of-government" attempts to restore balance.

*

As for the second Secret Service agent interviewed by the IBM Center for the Business of Government, his name is Dana Brown. He just so happened to have filled out his career with the Federal Air Marshall Service (October 2003-August 2008 as Director/Chief of Staff) followed by the TSA (March 2006-January 2009 as Asst. Administrator-Law Enforcement/Integrity Officer) states his LinkedIn profile. That he worked his way around to that which was largely put in place by the 1970 9/11 mini-event seems to me rather significant although I don't see all the details yet. I also don't yet see exactly who it was that birthed this lengthy 9/11 initiative we're suffering. It seems clear, however, that it was birthed prior to 1970.

The initiative has adjusted in some ways over time, but homage to 9/11 remains strong. Certain of the people deeply involved in these manipulations thought it was kismet that an individual well-suited to head the newly ordained Department of Homeland Security (that as we all know was the result of legislation rushed through Congress in the aftermath of the 9/11 (2001) attack) was born on the magical September 11th (this is Jeh Johnson); similarly, it is again being deemed a sign that the new Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) (chosen and positioned as she was) is first-named France (last name Cordova) and that this name so perfectly relates to US intentions to use the NSF to forward "ops" that will solidify a US-France working relationship in the same way the 2005 London Bombings helped solidify the US-British working relationship. These France going-ons are in higher gear (I've noticed) since Macron was elected but it was prepped for long ago. I was working for IBM under IBM project manager Cathie Skoog at the NSF when my third trimester pregnancy was sabotaged. The story of this sabotage and what followed is (briefly) this:

I've long-alleged that John and Avery Gunther (whose children I used to babysit) agreed to a quid pro quo exchange of financial compensation for help destroying my credibility on behalf of IBM against whom I'd filed a 2010 EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) charge and a subsequent May 2011 civil suit.

Per the May 11, 2011 Complaint, McGuire v. John and Avery Gunther:

3. On April 6, 2011 Mr. and Mrs Gunther, with uncontrolled greed and total disregard for the rights and feelings of Ms. Nadine McGuire as well as those of their children, AFG and XWG, maliciously and with ill-intent, wrongfully completed and executed a Complaint and Motion for Preliminary Injunction requesting formal protection against Ms. Nadine McGuire.

4. Over the course of the previous few months, Mr. and Mrs. Gunther, colluding with persons against whom Ms. Nadine McGuire is currently furthering litigation, including but not limited to plaintiff's mother, Pauline Scala McGuire, and from whom they received and/or have been promised to receive monetary incentives, hid their relationships with said individuals, further lied about having those relationships in direct conversation with Ms. Nadine McGuire and Court testimony on May 4, 2011, and wrongfully completed and executed a Complaint and Motion for Preliminary Injunction against Ms. Nadine McGuire in cooperation and collaboration with said persons, resulting in the issuance of a Temporary Restraining Order against Ms. Nadine McGuire issued on April 6, 2011.

- Initial Complaint, 5/11/11, McGuire v. John and Avery Gunther, Case No.:2011 CA 003703 B, DC Superior Court, Judge Gregory Jackson presiding

In regards to the suit against IBM (McGuire v. IBM, 1:11CV528, US District Court of Virginia), the only suit in which Pauline Scala McGuire was listed as a defendant, the most important claim was one of "assault" that led to the 2007 death of my son. Per the filing:

Plaintiff, Grace Nadine McGuire, realleges the allegations of paragraphs 1-65 hereof as if fully set forth within and further alleges:

66. Defendant Palmisano's conduct in ascertaining the drug that was used on the plaintiff to end her pregnancy and take the life of her child on April 22, 2007, constitutes an intentional touching of the plaintiff by defendant Palmisano, and was undertaken deliberately and with actual malice towards the plaintiff and her unborn child.

67. Defendant Skoog, Susan Horton and Scala's conduct in coordinating the circumstances, creating physical proximity and the administering of the drug to the plaintiff that ended her pregnancy and took the life of her child on April 22, 2007 constituted an intentional touching of the plaintiff by said defendants, and was undertaken deliberately and with actual malice towards the plaintiff and her unborn child.

... 69. As the direct and proximate result of defendant Palmisano, Skoog, Susan Horton, and Scala's conduct, the plaintiff suffered a severe placental abruption, which terminated her pregnancy and ended the life of her unborn child, causing the plaintiff to suffer damages including but not limited to the loss of her child, loss of affection, grief, sorrow, extreme mental torment and emotional distress.

- Initial Complaint, filed 5/16/11, McGuire v. IBM, et al, Case No.: 1:11CV528, US District Court of Virginia - Eastern Division, Alexandria, Judge Leonie Brinkema presiding

This is to say that John and Avery Gunther helped IBM defend against an allegation of murder, and in this way they are accomplices to a cover-up. This is also to say that the characterization provided by John and Avery Gunther in their April 2011 Superior Court filing for a Protection Order against me and their admissions in this filing of having provided derogatory information to various persons and/or entities in the DC area to include school administrators, psychologists, and law enforcement, were more to harm me, especially in my chances to hold IBM accountable, than to protect either themselves or children Anjulee and Xian Gunther.

I also long-allege that the relationship that developed from this initial quid pro quo led to John and Avery Gunther being similarly compensated for what turned into the sexual exploitation of their two daughters. For more on child sexual exploitation for the sake of personal and professional leverage, see especially the following:

Nick Bryant | The Franklin Scandal & The Elite's Pedophilia Cover Up,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68gvGGPjm0o&t=978s

That the NSF won't acknowledge the abuse, and won't respond even to my FOIA requests, and otherwise has gone to extents to protect Cathie Skoog and her co-conspirators at IBM and otherwise is all that was needed to have adequately turned the organization towards the interests of the Deep State. Now it is simply a matter of the Deep State continuing to put the NSF to use.

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Jeffrey Epstein in context:

(As sent to the Wash Post)

I send you this in response to the recent column entitled Believe in the Process by Kenneth Starr. Perhaps rethink any public affiliation with Ken Starr; although his demeanor on paper is undoubtably consoling, it is also a bit intoxifying when it would be best now if we keep our wits about us, no?

I say this from the following perspective - Ken Starr of the Starr Report, attorney for (1) Erik Prince of Blackwater and (2) convicted pedophile Jeffrey Epstein in context:

The Starr Report buried behind salacious detail of the Lewinsky affair almost nothing of Whitewater, Travelgate, or otherwise what many consider the murder of Vince Foster (Foster, albeit the subject of a different investigation was also under the purview of attorney Starr and formal investigation of the results of Starr's investigation were drowned out by the details of the Lewinsky affair.) This is a bit strange considering the Lewinsky affair was a moral failing and not an actionable criminal one as would have been the others had any proof surfaced.

Starr later defended Blackwater against wrongful deaths suit initiated by the families of the 2004 Fallujah Ambush victims - "In October 2006, Blackwater hired one of the nation's heaviest-hitting lawyers to represent it - Kenneth Starr, the independent counsel in the 1999 impeachment of President Bill Clinton over the Monica Lewinsky sex scandal... Starr and his colleagues argued that Blackwater was "constitutionally immune" from such lawsuits and said that if the Fallujah case were allowed to proceed, "Blackwater will suffer irreparable harm." In the eighteen-page petition to the Supreme Court, Blackwater argued that there are no other such lawsuits against private military/security companies in state courts "because the comprehensive regulatory scheme enacted by Congress and the President grant military contractors like Blackwater immunity from state-court litigation." (pp. 234-235, Blackwater). (Author Ken Davis writes) "The four men had spent the night before they set off at marine base Camp Fallujah. But the men kept their distance from the leathernecks. Had they spoken to the marines, the Blackwater team might have learned that the Americans were already in the midst of a major offensive meant to assert control over the increasingly restive city, where elements of the radical Islamist movement and remnants of Saddam's army were beginning to aggressively strike back. at the American occupation" (p. 306, The Hidden History of American at War), and perhaps this is the only thing that makes sense of the fact that "Under the terms of its contract, Blackwater was supposed to supply these convoy security missions with two SUVs, each carrying three guards per vehicle; a driver, one man riding shotgun, and a third man in back with a heavy machine gun. Instead, the foursome set out that morning with just two men per car, each vehicle missing their rear gunner. The SUVs were only outfitted with a steel plate as extra armor. And the men had not been given maps." (p. 305).

Starr went on to defend Jeffrey Epstein abasing allegations of child sex trafficking - "Along with a dream team of attorneys that included Gerald Lefcourt, Roy Black, and Ken Starr, [Alan Dershowitz] was successful in getting federal investigators not to charge Epstein with moving his victims across state lines and other associated crimes. The federal non-prosecution agreement Epstein's legal team negotiated with the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida immunized all named and unnamed "potential co-conspirators" in Epstein's child trafficking network, which includes those who allegedly procured minors for Epstein and also any powerbrokers who may have molested them" (-http://gawker.com/flight-logs-put-clinton-dershowitz-on-ped…). Otherwise, Epstein's eventual 18 month sentence by the state of Florida was exceptionally light under the circumstances to include the number of victims who came forward with testimony. This is best understood in the context of children being used as a means to government-sponsored sexual blackmail and other forms of leverage.

See here Erik Prince in greater context: (the similarities between him and once (secretly) favored child Bin Laden)

The coordinations among global intelligence to make rather than eliminate terror as seen thru "assets" bin Laden (as M. Noriega before him) & Erik Prince:

About BL: "Some CIA officers will later say that [BL] serves as a semi-official liaison between the GIP [Saudi intel.] and warlords like Sayyaf."
(www.historycommons.org/entity.jsp?entity=ahmed_badeeb_1)

About EP: “Handcuffed by politics, the CIA had not been able to cultivate relationships with the key but messy leaders. Fortunately, Blackwater had no such political restrictions.” (p. 54, Civilian Warriors by E. Prince)

We see also:

About BL: "Bin Laden established camps inside Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan and trained volunteers from across the Muslim world to fight against the Soviet-backed regime, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan” (Wikipedia)

About EP: "In his autobiography, he states that during the Yugoslav Wars in the early 1990s, he realized the need for private training facilities for special operations… Prince moved to Virginia Beach and personally financed the formation of Blackwater Worldwide in 1997. He bought 6,000 acres (24 km2) of the Great Dismal Swamp of North Carolina and set up a school for special operations” (Wikipedia)

Erik Prince is (becoming) no less an Amer. intelligence success story than bin Laden (in support of Terrorism as Geostrategy & a New World Order - see below). In short: (we note the repeating 9/11s, every 11 years): "Toward a NWO" speech by Bush #41 - Sept. 11 ('90); The WTC - Sept. 11 ('01); Benghazi - Sept. 11 ('12). (There is rhy. & reason also 2 the rise of ISIS.)

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About training camps:

I watched so to speak the creating of little torture pockets around the world as justified by Obama's desire to close Gitmo. The White House reports (2/23/16): "We'll continue to securely and responsibly transfer to other countries the 35 detainees already approved for transfer. This process involves extensive and careful coordination across our federal government to ensure that our national security interests are met when an individual is transferred to another country. We insist, for example, that foreign countries institute strong security measures." But are these not just the seeds of new training camps (growing concentrated and lauded violent temperaments) & was that not someone's exact intent?

In real-time (and as perpetrated on captured children):

3/19/14, sent to the now defunct FB page of D. Cheney:
Dick Cheney,

I wonder if it's possible that there is coordination with other countries concerning enhanced interrogation techniques, in the form of training perhaps?

Specifically, here in the United States, my sense is that there may be the use of vulnerable populations, with the intension to gain favor with and/or intimidate others, especially members of the international community.

*

And:

On Saturday, June 21, 2014 6:37 AM, [redacted] wrote:
To: [redacted]

Deputy Lyddy,

Her energy is very weak. She is physically exhausted, VERY sleep deprived, and HUNGRY.

[These were continuing experimentations in reversed-engineered SERE; the agreed upon techniques, taken from various regions of the world to be distributed to the various regions of the world, had to be deemed not torture and this is where organizations like the APA stepped in, then (during the Bush administration), and afterwards. See here for example: "And I think, you know, what's really important in the debate going forward among psychologists is the extent to which psychologists loaned their names and loaned their credentials and their Ph.D.s to this kind of activity and essentially were used by the Bush administration to provide a kind of "get out of jail free" card for the people who were, you know, doing these interrogations, because the logic, which I think Mark had mentioned, is, you know, this circular logic. So long as there are trained psychologists from the SERE program who are on site at these interrogations who are saying that these detainees can withstand this treatment, are not being harmed psychologically, then it's not torture. So, you know, you’ve got this sort of [inaudible] tortured — tortured logic, which is the phrase that has come up, but it’s this sort of self-justifying loop in which professionals are loaning their credentials to this kind of activity. And you see the same thing in the Office of Legal Counsel, where you have, you know, lawyers loaning their credentials to approving what are clear violations of the Geneva Conventions." (https://www.democracynow.org/2009/4/21/the_story_of_mitchell_jessen_associates)]

From: Weingarten, Reid [redacted]
Sent: 7/4/2017 5:57:07 PM
To: jeffrey E. [jeevacation@gmail.com]
Subject: Re: The new iterations of Ghislaine Maxwell

Importance: High

Too down...give me another day

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: jeffrey E.
Sent: Tuesday, July 4, 2017 12:53 PM
To: Weingarten, Reid
Subject: Re: Fw: The new iterations of Ghislaine Maxwell

On Tue, Jul 4, 2017 at 6:46 PM Weingarten, Reid [redacted] wrote:

Number?

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone.

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, July 1, 2017 12:49 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: Ainbanklaw Info; [redacted] Denyse Sabagh; [redacted]; Michael Baxter; [redacted]; Patrick M. Regan; [redacted]; Robert Barnett; Weingarten, Reid; [redacted]; Ellen Kerns; [redacted]
Subject: Re: The new iterations of Ghislaine Maxwell

We know of course that Saturdays are reserved for Matthew Horton.

On Saturday, July 1, 2017, 12:06:29 PM EDT, [redacted] wrote:

Rich Beckler,
Ken Adams,

Do you remember when I'd asked you what your daughters did for a living? Especially last night Mr. Beckler, as most Friday nights, no?

Yes, they are the new iterations of Ghislaine Maxwell; for you Richard Beckler, this originated from my being a former Stone Ridge classmate of his elder daughter Katie Beckler, and because he was on the Board of Stone Ridge during this period in time when my every family, friend, acquaintance and association was being contacted, bribed in one form or another, and turned against me (see below); as for Ken Adams, it stemmed from my having contacted him for representation in my 2011-filed case against IBM also during this period of time when my every communication were being tracked.

You both are interesting; you let us see what's to become of the Scalia 35 (see below; at bottom, Ghislaine Maxwell's Jeffrey Epstein in context.)

*

We start from this following precept: (the repeating 9/11s)

1. "Toward a New World Order" speech by Pres. George H.W. Bush – 9/11 (1990)

2. WTC Attack – 9/11 (2001)

3. BENGHAZI Attack – 9/11 (2012)

But you have to remember that H. W. Bush was planted:

AUTHOR PETER DALE SCOTT: Sometimes you have little deep events that most people don't even notice. One of those would be the Halloween Massacre. The older people remember the Saturday Night Massacre which happened under Nixon. I'm talking about the Halloween Massacre of October 31, 1975, and probably people watching this show have never heard of it.

That was under Ford, and Ford may have condoned it because it was trying to help restore his popularity. He was going way down in the polls. But it was a very important series of events all on the same night. The head of the CIA was fired, William Colby, replaced by a relatively unknown man called George H. W. Bush who then went on to authorize something that Colby had refused to authorize - the Team B report - the Team B to recalculate the Soviet threat and it was predetermined. They were going to find that it was much bigger than the professionals angled like Raymond [inaudible] that I mentioned.

They said Russia is less of a threat now than it used to be. Well, that was terrible news for the industrial complex so the Team B came in and said oh, no, no, no, it's much more of a threat than it used to be, and that's why we got this huge military build-up. It started actually under Carter but we think of it as the Reagan build-up, and that of course is a major factor in having ended the Soviet Union because the Soviet Union tried to match it with a weaker economy. And that arms race which was not about threats but was about fighting economic war, that was an arms race which you could say that the Soviet Union lost because they couldn't keep it up. Their economy went more and more downhill because they were deflecting resources away from vital domestic functions. But really I'm trying to talk here about the Halloween Massacre...

Just the change in the CIA was a major historical event but it wasn't very visible. The second thing that happened was they fired Jim Schlesinger as Secretary of Defense... It was being done by [President Ford's] Chief of Staff and his assistant who are two names barely known then but quite famous since. Chief of staff was Donald Rumsfeld and the assistant was Dick Cheney. And that was the first real intrusion of the Rumsfeld-Cheney team into American politics. And they became the real heart of what I consider the Deep State in the 1980s when they were planning for Continuity of Government which was a plan for emergency rules like warrantless surveillance and warrantless detention and the militarization of homeland security. All those things were planned all through the '80s - COG planning by Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney. Even when Rumsfeld wasn't in the government, he was authorized by Reagan to do this planning.

And why is that important to our history? Because in 2001, these two men were now in the government - Vice President and Secretary of Defense - the two top people in Washington on

September the 11th, 2001 when Bush was down in Florida - George W. Bush - and what did they do on that day? They implemented the plans they had been planning for 20 years. Another major event in American history but it's not usually told that way.

We implemented - it's in the 9/11 Commission Report that COG plans were implemented on that day. This is a huge change in our country. We now have an ARMY command, NORTHCOM, to take charge of America - North America, the way SOUTHCOM is in charge of South America and CENTCOM is in charge of Central Asia.

This used to be illegal... We had the posse comitatus acts which said, yes, if there's a real emergency you could call up the ARMY to deal with the emergency, but you cannot do it on a permanent basis but we now do do it on a permanent basis. We haven't even bothered to repeal the posse comitatus. We are in a state of emergency that was declared on September the 14th, 2001. And it's still enforced. It has to be renewed every year. Obama did it every year just as George Bush renewed it every year.

What are the roots of this? Well there are the legitimate roots that go back to fear of an atomic decapitation of the government back in the Truman era, so legitimate COG planning goes back to Truman and Eisenhower, but the illegitimate use of COG to deal with any emergnecy you like, that goes to the Reagan administration and it really goes back to the [Halloween] Massacre where Rumsfeld and Cheney put their thumbprint on American politics for the first time.

-- interview of Peter Dale Scott, @ min. 32:00,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNqDAYWYFuQ&t=2433s

This all suggests that the start of the 9/11 agenda pre-dated him as well. I see now that there was a seemingly relevant 1990 event as well. "On September 11, 1970 -- a date that only took on haunting overtones with the attacks on New York and Washington in 2001 -- Nixon became the first U.S. president to try to protect air travelers from extremists who sensed gaping vulnerabilities in security for commercial airliners, issuing a statement listing a string of measures including the introduction of 100 air marshals on U.S. planes. "Most countries, including the United States, found effective means of dealing with piracy on the high seas a century and a half ago," Nixon said. "We can -- and we will -- deal effectively with piracy in the skies today."
The President had been jolted into action by the simultaneous hijackings of planes in Europe headed to the United States. Jets belonging to TWA, Pan Am and Swissair were seized by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The group also attempted to hijack a jet over London belonging to the Israeli airline El Al but was thwarted by security guards on board.
The Pan Am seizure ended quickly, but the passengers on the TWA and Swissair jets were diverted to a British air base in Jordan and the drama only ended after days of tense diplomacy, when the hostages were all released in a deal in which the Swiss, German, British and Israeli governments let Palestinian prisoners go." (http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/27/politics/terrorism-1970s-richard-nixon/index.html)

This 9/11 response sounds quite normal of course. But fast forward and the two secret service individuals chosen for an April 2001 interview by a PWC staff member on behalf of what becomthe IBM Center for the Business of Government were (1) Steve Colo who happened to be the head of the division at SAIC that falsely labeled me a threat and added my name to some sort of Do Not Admit list at the end of a 5 month temp assignment in 2005 into early 2006. The consequence of the SAIC designation for me was the following:

(I write) "The SAIC designation took advantage of a devilish stratagem in which as a national security employee (having filed out a SF-86 form, governed actually by the GSA -

https://www.gsa.gov/portal/forms/download/116390 - for government clearance) working a designated contract in a classified facility, being designated a disturbance/dissident/threat to operations, makes one, in turn, a threat to national security - with all the surveillance/targeting that enables." In essence I was made an enemy of the State and was tracked, my family and friends turned, my opportunities seized to include the opportunity to rear family as demonstrated especially in the 2007 sabotage of my third trimester pregnancy and then the targeting and eventual capture of children I used to babysit - in 2011, they were predominantly tweens - to be used for sexual blackmail and other forms of leverage. The reason for the use of children in this barbaric way was to expend "ops" that were already in effect and had been used to control many of the politicians that have been allowed to rise to the top (see info on the Franklin Scandal for example), and similarly according to the laws of compromise, the following which has been recently developing into highly coordinated murder "ops":

(I write) "The progress that was made from the absorbing of my (small) network (and this through sources and methods - money and other pleasureful compensations given to those willing to participate in and/or coordinate violence against me and my loved ones to include children leading only to now their enabled targeting and the absorbing of whatever may be their networks - well, you see below (and this only the very tip of the iceberg) how many people they've been able to engulf and what advances have been made by the quite elaborate criminal class employing these tactics; and one also begins to better understand the events surrounding Justice Scalia's passing and what's to come for the 35 guests in Scalia's private party. As for Scalia's passing, it was decidedly suspicious as noted by William Ritchie: (The Washington Post prints) “As a former homicide commander, I am stunned that no autopsy was ordered for Justice Scalia,” William O. Ritchie, former head of criminal investigations for D.C. police, wrote in a post on Facebook on Sunday... Ritchie also raised questions about the marshals’ actions: “How can the Marshal say, without a thorough post mortem, that he was not injected with an illegal substance that would simulate a heart attack… Did the US Marshal check for petechial hemorrhage in his eyes or under his lips that would have suggested suffocation? Did the US Marshal smell his breath for any unusual odor that might suggest poisoning? My gut tells me there is something fishy going on in Texas.”

As for SAIC, the following also pertains:

(I write) "If you first see SAIC as what's called a systems integrator (author Tim Shorrock's phrase), and also the formerly married Bud and Sue Horton and their two grown sons Matthew Horton and Ben Lanier as aids of an implementation, you can better see the bigger picture:

(1) Sue Horton left IBM in early 2007-ish for an executive position at Tetra Tech which soon entered into joint venture with SAIC (Sue's employer prior to IBM, btw) on an enormous (billion dollar) 2011 Hillary Clinton State Department award (http://www.prnewswire.com/…/saic-tetra-tech-joint-venture-a…);

(2) that Bud Horton left IBM in early 2009-ish for an executive position at Accenture which soon thereafter entered into joint venture with SAIC spin-off Leidos, and Cerner, on an enormous (billion dollar) 2015 DoD award (http://www.healthcareitnews.com/…/dod-names-ehr-contract-wi…);

(3) that the Sue Horton contract was used to grow and fortify the Afghan heroin trade (as well as corrupt law enforcement) although the stated intention was of course the opposite... ("[SAIC and Tetra Tech's] joint venture, Integrated Justice Systems International, LLC (IJSI), has been awarded a contract to provide worldwide civilian police and criminal justice assistance to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)... [specifically} to provide INL with program management, criminal justice, and life and mission support to countries emerging from conflict or otherwise facing instability challenges. Under this new contract, IJSI will

provide technical assistance, training, logistics and infrastructure services to support the Department of State's efforts to strengthen criminal justice systems in select partner countries.")... yet, just months shy of contract end, the NY Times reported: "Tasked With Combating Opium, Afghan Officials Profit From It;" "Penetrating Every Stage of Afghan Opium Chain, Taliban become a Cartel;" and "Corrupt Combatants Fight for Control of Lucrative Afghan Drug Trade;" see also here an overview of the growth of Afghan opium production from the start of the US occupation (2001) to the present, and especially from contract start (2011) to end (2016): http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-spoils-of-war-afghanist…/91;

(4) and that the award Bud Horton helped secure just as Sue's contract was coming to an end was not only born from what looks like Franklin Scandal compromises, but it is this contract that seems intent on implementing bioterrorism as the new form of explosive terrorism."

(Note that both members of this family were awarded BILLION dollar contracts; that's quite exceptional, no?)

As for terrorism as an US industry, it's hardly better seen than through the following which is information of course we all know:

We note that in-between Bush #41's 9/11/1990 speech(with Dick Cheney as his Secretary of Defense) and the 9/11/2001 attack on the WTC were little more than Clinton's 8 years in the White House. We look also to The American Deep State by Peter Dale Scott for evidence of ties between the actions of the Clinton administration and (1) the 1993 attack on the WTC and (2) the 1998 attack on the US embassy in Nairobi, Kenya which demonstrate that the Clinton administration in no uncertain terms sponsored terrorism:

(Writes Scott) "The homicidal crime suggested by Fenton's meticulous research is one both difficult and painful to contemplate. It has to be considered in the light of the earlier instances of protection we have surveyed:

1. the protection given to Salameh and Abouhalima in the 1990 Kahane murder, leaving them free to participate in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing;

2. the failure for two or three years to process Ali Mohamed's documents seized in 1990, which could have prevented the 1993 World Trade Center bombing;

3. the release of Ali Mohamed from Royal Canadian Mounted Police detention in 1993, leaving him free to participate in the 1998 Nairobi Embassy bombing;

4. the treatment of Ali Mohamed as an "unindicted coconspirator" in the 1993 WTC bombing case and Landmarks case, leaving him free to participate in the 1998 Nairobi Embassy bombing.

(pp. 76-77, The American Deep State)

Scott had earlier examined these attacks in especial connection to the September 11, 2001 attack on the WTC:

(Writes Scott) "For indeed it is certain that on various occasions U.S. agencies have intervened, letting al-Qaeda terrorists proceed with their plots. This alarming statement will be dismissed by some as "conspiracy theory." Yet in this chapter, I will show that this claim doesn't to arise from theory, but from facts that are true, even though they have been systemically suppressed or under-reported in the American mainstream media. I am describing a phenomenon that occurred not just once, but repeatedly, almost predictably. We shall see that, among the al-Qaeda terrorists who were first protected and then continued their activities were the following:

1. Ali Mohamed, identified in the 9/11 Commission Report as the leader of the 1998 Nairobi Embassy bombing;

2. Mohammed Jamal Khalife, Osama bin Laden's close friend and, while in the Philippines, financier of both Ramzi Yousef (principal architect of the first World Trade Center [WTC] attack) and his uncle Khalid Sheikh Mohammed;

3. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, identified in the 9/11 Commission Report as "the principal architect of the 9/11 attacks";

4. Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi, two of the alleged 9/11 hijackers, whose presence in the United States was concealed from the FBI by CIA officers for months before 9/11.

It might sound from these citations that the 9/11 Commission marked a new stage in the U.S. treatment of these terrorists, and that the report now exposed those terrorists who in the past had been protected. On the contrary, a principal purpose of my chapter is to show that

1. one purpose of protecting these individuals had been to protect a valued intelligence connection (the "al-Qaeda connection," if you will);
2. one major intention of the 9/11 Commission Report was to continue protecting this connection;
3. those on the 9/11 Commission staff who were charged with this protection included at least one commission member (Jamie Gorelick), one staff member (Dietrich Snell), and one important witness (Patrick Fitzgerald) who earlier had figured among the terrorists' protectors.

In the course of writing this chapter [Scott continues], I came to another disturbing conclusion I had not anticipated. This is that a central feature of the protection has been to defend the 9/11 Commission's false picture of al-Qaeda as an example of non-state terrorism, ignoring not just the CIA but also the royal families of Saudi Arabia and Qatar. In reality, as I shall show, royal family protection from Qatar and Saudi Arabia (concealed by the 9/11 Commission) was repeatedly given to key figures like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the alleged "principal architect of the 9/11 attacks." The establishment claims that the wars fought by America in Asia since 9/11 have been part of a global "war on terror." But this "war on terror" has been fought in alliance with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Pakistan - precisely the principal political and financial backers of the al-Qaedist networks the United States has supposedly been fighting. Meanwhile the most authentic opponents in the region of these Sunni al-Qaedists - the governments of Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Iran - have found themselves overthrown (in the case of Iraq and Libya), subverted with U.S. support (in the case of Syria), or sanctioned and threatened as part of an "axis of evil" (in the case of Iran). We should not forget that, just one day after 9/11, "Rumsfeld was talking about broadening the objectives of our response and 'getting Iraq.'"

(pp. 44-45, The American Deep State)

Clinton's daughter is now poised to work global health initiatives which I would suggest is little more than a cover for on-going terrorism "ops".

To return to Steve Colo - in the interview he speaks of a partnership between the Secret Service, the FBI, and South Carolina's SLED (State Law Enforcement Division) to open a Computer Crime Center. Bud Horton (mentioned above) (long-affiliated with IT Security; his title at Accenture was Chief technology officer of it's cyber security practice) happened to have just moved to South

Carolina from Loudoun County after being implicated in a continuing child sex scandal (see details below). Further, cyber-crime just so happens to be another of the arenas in which our Intelligence Community coordinates with the Russians: "The US cooperates with the FSB and Russia's interior ministry on counter-terrorism, organized crime, bio-terrorism, and cyber-crime." -- p. 243, Expelled: A Journalist's Descent into the Russian Mafia State, by Luke Harding) Most would interpret this quote to suggest that the nations work together to prevent these various threats. The reality is more the opposite; trust me when I say that the US doesn't work "ops" alone - the 2005 London Bombings is one notable example of a instance in which the US coordinated with also British intelligence in the perpetration of an attack.) I just tweeted this morning actually the following in regards to US coordinations with the Russians: "One must know a renowned Rus mafiaso was granted entry https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vyacheslav_Ivankov#Moving_to_the_United_States … be4 the real story of today's US-Rus relations is slowly known" in response to the following comment @turndeaux: Peter Dale Scott, who writes about the Deep State, says Russia issue is "a bona fide security issue, not a diversion".

About Bud Horton and the Loudoun County matter - in attempts to make a long story short, the following email chain:

On Monday, June 26, 2017 10:57 AM, [redacted] wrote:

Sheriff Chapman,
Loudoun Count, VA

Did you ever consider that Loudoun was a target? That your community was induced to walk it's own children down the plank as compensation for what Loudoun had done to the young Dima Yakovlev? Because now child exploitation is deeply embedded within your community with your own people (your own police, your own prosecutors, your own public defenders and private attorneys) protecting this very system that will be used to take the futures of your Loudoun children (see more of the details below). Is it possible that that's how this happened, and you saw it not unfolding before your eyes? Or was it simply money and just another good enough justification?

Forwarded Message

On Monday, June 26, 2017 10:24 AM, [redacted] wrote:

Changeis,

You reported in May of 2014 that you hired Bob Richel formerly of the DEA as Vice President of Corporate Development. In an April 2014 interview by the Loudoun County Police (those in the mouth of the lion but not quite aware of it yet but to have foreseen the ways in which the 2008 death of the Russian born 21 month-old Dima Yakovlev (renamed Chase Harrison by his Purcellville, VA adoptive parents) would have been used as "justification" for a (quite profitable) counter-offensive...) of Henry "Bud" Horton (characterized by Loudoun County as a "victim" of the recent "False statement to Law Enforcement Officer (LEO)" of him sexually exploiting the 15 year-old Anjulee Gunther), Henry "Bud" Horton named Bob Rachel as one of the DEA guys he used to work with. This takes on unusual significance in light of the below, no?

(How lovely, by the way, this following information and the ways in which it helps us understand many of the hidden influences: "Halliburton is also involved with the Russian mob. They're got sort of two things going on. One is oil and the other is drug trafficking. Halliburton is a story all by itself." (says Stan Goff, http://narconews.com/goffmccormick1.html))

On Saturday, June 24, 2017 2:43 PM, [redacted] wrote:

Mr. Satz,
State's Attorney, Broward County, Fl

I'm forwarding the below information as it pertains to Mrs. Lesley Simms and more importantly the ones with whom she continues to coordinate.

As you may know, she was once close with an individual named Matthew Horton with whom she attended George Mason University, and through Matthew, Ms. Simms became well-acquainted with Matthew's parents Henry "Bud" Horton and Sue Popovich Horton who helped secure her a position at IBM upon her graduation from GMU. Both of these latter individuals (Bud and Sue Horton) were involved in the 2007 murder of my son, and they in collusion with their son Matthew continue in the exploitation of children Anjulee and Xian Gunther. The powers that be intend now for these children to (continue to) follow in the footsteps of Ms. Simms, and to that end, I would advise that you become acquainted with (1) the ways in which Ms. Simms subsidized her law school education and off course (2) her current and related endeavors especially as they relate to drug trafficking and terror financing (see below email to Mr. Martin of the St. Augustine Record).

On Friday, June 23, 2017 8:36 AM, [redacted] wrote:

Mr. Martin,
St. Augustine Record

Quite an interesting article about the litigation between Deputy Banks and Rusty Rogers (see: Deputy Banks' attorney claims FDLE agent's credibility 'destroyed') It must also be explored, of course, that Officers Rodgers was once well respected for his investigation and exposure of a terrorist financing network that permeated the sunny state of Florida - (the NY Times reports) "Agent Rodgers joined the state's elite investigative unit, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, where he quickly earned agent-of-the-year honors — and a meeting with the governor — for helping dismantle a terrorist financing network that stretched from Florida to the Middle East" - and that terrorism is very much a well-protected U.S. industry (see below).

God forbid some poor should get away with disrupting the delicate state of secreted operations; as you yourself report, "As written in [Plaintiff Banks'] motion: "Defendant Rodgers' false, misleading and inconsistent testimony throughout the discovery process is so pervasive and extreme, and involves so many material issues, it has destroyed Defendant's credibility on all issues..." And here we see the "whole-of-government" attempts to restore balance.

*

As for the second Secret Service agent interviewed by the IBM Center for the Business of Government, his name is Dana Brown. He just so happened to have filled out his career with the Federal Air Marshall Service (October 2003-August 2008 as Director/Chief of Staff) followed by the TSA (March 2006-January 2009 as Asst. Administrator-Law Enforcement/Integrity Officer) states his LinkedIn profile. That he worked his way around to that which was largely put in place by the 1970 9/11 mini-event seems to me rather significant although I don't see all the details yet. I also don't yet see exactly who it was that birthed this lengthy 9/11 initiative we're suffering. It seems clear, however, that it was birthed prior to 1970.

The initiative has adjusted in some ways over time, but homage to 9/11 remains strong. Certain of the people deeply involved in these manipulations thought it was kismet that an individual well-suited to head the newly ordained Department of Homeland Security (that as we all know was the result of legislation rushed through Congress in the aftermath of the 9/11 (2001) attack) was born on the magical September 11th (this is Jeh Johnson); similarly, it is again being deemed a sign that the new Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF) (chosen and positioned as she was) is first-named France (last name Cordova) and that this name so perfectly relates to US intentions to use the NSF to forward "ops" that will solidify a US-France working relationship in the same way the 2005 London Bombings helped solidify the US-British working relationship. These France going-ons are in higher gear (I've noticed) since Macron was elected but it was prepped for long ago. I was working for IBM under IBM project manager Cathie Skoog at the NSF when my third trimester pregnancy was sabotaged. The story of this sabotage and what followed is (briefly) this:

I've long-alleged that John and Avery Gunther (whose children I used to babysit) agreed to a quid pro quo exchange of financial compensation for help destroying my credibility on behalf of IBM against whom I'd filed a 2010 EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) charge and a subsequent May 2011 civil suit.

Per the May 11, 2011 Complaint, McGuire v. John and Avery Gunther:

3. On April 6, 2011 Mr. and Mrs Gunther, with uncontrolled greed and total disregard for the rights and feelings of Ms. Nadine McGuire as well as those of their children, AFG and XWG, maliciously and with ill-intent, wrongfully completed and executed a Complaint and Motion for Preliminary Injunction requesting formal protection against Ms. Nadine McGuire.

4. Over the course of the previous few months, Mr. and Mrs. Gunther, colluding with persons against whom Ms. Nadine McGuire is currently furthering litigation, including but not limited to plaintiff's mother, Pauline Scala McGuire, and from whom they received and/or have been promised to receive monetary incentives, hid their relationships with said individuals, further lied about having those relationships in direct conversation with Ms. Nadine McGuire and Court testimony on May 4, 2011, and wrongfully completed and executed a Complaint and Motion for Preliminary Injunction against Ms. Nadine McGuire in cooperation and collaboration with said persons, resulting in the issuance of a Temporary Restraining Order against Ms. Nadine McGuire issued on April 6, 2011.

- Initial Complaint, 5/11/11, McGuire v. John and Avery Gunther, Case No.:2011 CA 003703 B, DC Superior Court, Judge Gregory Jackson presiding

In regards to the suit against IBM (McGuire v. IBM, 1:11CV528, US District Court of Virginia), the only suit in which Pauline Scala McGuire was listed as a defendant, the most important claim was one of “assault” that led to the 2007 death of my son. Per the filing:

Plaintiff, Grace Nadine McGuire, realleges the allegations of paragraphs 1-65 hereof as if fully set forth within and further alleges:

66. Defendant Palmisano's conduct in ascertaining the drug that was used on the plaintiff to end her pregnancy and take the life of her child on April 22, 2007, constitutes an intentional touching of the plaintiff by defendant Palmisano, and was undertaken deliberately and with actual malice towards the plaintiff and her unborn child.

67. Defendant Skoog, Susan Horton and Scala's conduct in coordinating the circumstances, creating physical proximity and the administering of the drug to the plaintiff that ended her pregnancy and took the life of her child on April 22, 2007 constituted an intentional touching of the plaintiff by said

defendants, and was undertaken deliberately and with actual malice towards the plaintiff and her unborn child.

... 69. As the direct and proximate result of defendant Palmisano, Skoog, Susan Horton, and Scala's conduct, the plaintiff suffered a severe placental abruption, which terminated her pregnancy and ended the life of her unborn child, causing the plaintiff to suffer damages including but not limited to the loss of her child, loss of affection, grief, sorrow, extreme mental torment and emotional distress.

- Initial Complaint, filed 5/16/11, McGuire v. IBM, et al, Case No.: 1:11CV528, US District Court of Virginia - Eastern Division, Alexandria, Judge Leonie Brinkema presiding

This is to say that John and Avery Gunther helped IBM defend against an allegation of murder, and in this way they are accomplices to a cover-up. This is also to say that the characterization provided by John and Avery Gunther in their April 2011 Superior Court filing for a Protection Order against me and their admissions in this filing of having provided derogatory information to various persons and/or entities in the DC area to include school administrators, psychologists, and law enforcement, were more to harm me, especially in my chances to hold IBM accountable, than to protect either themselves or children Anjulee and Xian Gunther.

I also long-allege that the relationship that developed from this initial quid pro quo led to John and Avery Gunther being similarly compensated for what turned into the sexual exploitation of their two daughters. For more on child sexual exploitation for the sake of personal and professional leverage, see especially the following:

Nick Bryant | The Franklin Scandal & The Elite's Pedophilia Cover Up, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68gvGGPjm0o&t=978s

That the NSF won't acknowledge the abuse, and won't respond even to my FOIA requests, and otherwise has gone to extents to protect Cathie Skoog and her co-conspirators at IBM and otherwise is all that was needed to have adequately turned the organization towards the interests of the Deep State. Now it is simply a matter of the Deep State continuing to put the NSF to use.

*

*

Jeffrey Epstein in context:

(As sent to the Wash Post)

I send you this in response to the recent column entitled Believe in the Process by Kenneth Starr. Perhaps rethink any public affiliation with Ken Starr; although his demeanor on paper is undoubtably consoling, it is also a bit intoxifying when it would be best now if we keep our wits about us, no?

I say this from the following perspective - Ken Starr of the Starr Report, attorney for (1) Erik Prince of Blackwater and (2) convicted pedophile Jeffrey Epstein in context:

The Starr Report buried behind salacious detail of the Lewinsky affair almost nothing of Whitewater, Travelgate, or otherwise what many consider the murder of Vince Foster (Foster, albeit the subject of a different investigation was also under the purview of attorney Starr and formal investigation of the results of Starr's investigation were drowned out by the details of the Lewinsky affair.) This is a bit strange considering the Lewinsky affair was a moral failing and not an actionable criminal one as would have been the others had any proof surfaced.

Starr later defended Blackwater against wrongful deaths suit initiated by the families of the 2004 Fallujah Ambush victims - "In October 2006, Blackwater hired one of the nation's heaviest-hitting lawyers to represent it - Kenneth Starr, the independent counsel in the 1999 impeachment of President Bill Clinton over the Monica Lewinsky sex scandal... Starr and his colleagues argued that Blackwater was "constitutionally immune" from such lawsuits and said that if the Fallujah case were allowed to proceed, "Blackwater will suffer irreparable harm." In the eighteen-page petition to the Supreme Court, Blackwater argued that there are no other such lawsuits against private military/security companies in state courts "because the comprehensive regulatory scheme enacted by Congress and the President grant military contractors like Blackwater immunity from state-court litigation." (pp. 234-235, Blackwater). (Author Ken Davis writes) "The four men had spent the night before they set off at marine base Camp Fallujah. But the men kept their distance from the leathernecks. Had they spoken to the marines, the Blackwater team might have learned that the Americans were already in the midst of a major offensive meant to assert control over the increasingly restive city, where elements of the radical Islamist movement and remnants of Saddam's army were beginning to aggressively strike back. at the American occupation" (p. 306, The Hidden History of American at War), and perhaps this is the only thing that makes sense of the fact that "Under the terms of its contract, Blackwater was supposed to supply these convoy security missions with two SUVs, each carrying three guards per vehicle; a driver, one man riding shotgun, and a third man in back with a heavy machine gun. Instead, the foursome set out that morning with just two men per car, each vehicle missing their rear gunner. The SUVs were only outfitted with a steel plate as extra armor. And the men had not been given maps." (p. 305).

Starr went on to defend Jeffrey Epstein abasing allegations of child sex trafficking - "Along with a dream team of attorneys that included Gerald Lefcourt, Roy Black, and Ken Starr, [Alan Dershowitz] was successful in getting federal investigators not to charge Epstein with moving his victims across state lines and other associated crimes. The federal non-prosecution agreement Epstein's legal team negotiated with the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida immunized all named and unnamed "potential co-conspirators" in Epstein's child trafficking network, which includes those who allegedly procured minors for Epstein and also any powerbrokers who may have molested them" (-http://gawker.com/flight-logs-put-clinton-dershowitz-on-ped…). Otherwise, Epstein's eventual 18 month sentence by the state of Florida was exceptionally light under the circumstances to include the number of victims who came forward with testimony. This is best understood in the context of children being used as a means to government-sponsored sexual blackmail and other forms of leverage.

See here Erik Prince in greater context: (the similarities between him and once (secretly) favored child Bin Laden)

The coordinations among global intelligence to make rather than eliminate terror as seen thru "assets" bin Laden (as M. Noriega before him) & Erik Prince:

About BL: "Some CIA officers will later say that [BL] serves as a semi-official liaison between the GIP [Saudi intel.] and warlords like Sayyaf."
(www.historycommons.org/entity.jsp?entity=ahmed_badeeb_1)

About EP: "Handcuffed by politics, the CIA had not been able to cultivate relationships with the key but messy leaders. Fortunately, Blackwater had no such political restrictions." (p. 54, Civilian Warriors by E. Prince)

We see also:

About BL: "Bin Laden established camps inside Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan and trained volunteers from across the Muslim world to fight against the Soviet-backed regime, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan" (Wikipedia)

About EP: "In his autobiography, he states that during the Yugoslav Wars in the early 1990s, he realized the need for private training facilities for special operations… Prince moved to Virginia Beach and personally financed the formation of Blackwater Worldwide in 1997. He bought 6,000 acres (24 km2) of the Great Dismal Swamp of North Carolina and set up a school for special operations" (Wikipedia)

Erik Prince is (becoming) no less an Amer. intelligence success story than bin Laden (in support of Terrorism as Geostrategy & a New World Order - see below). In short: (we note the repeating 9/11s, every 11 years): "Toward a NWO" speech by Bush #41 - Sept. 11 ('90); The WTC - Sept. 11 ('01); Benghazi - Sept. 11 ('12). (There is rhy. & reason also 2 the rise of ISIS.)

***

About training camps:

I watched so to speak the creating of little torture pockets around the world as justified by Obama's desire to close Gitmo. The White House reports (2/23/16): "We'll continue to securely and responsibly transfer to other countries the 35 detainees already approved for transfer. This process involves extensive and careful coordination across our federal government to ensure that our national security interests are met when an individual is transferred to another country. We insist, for example, that foreign countries institute strong security measures." But are these not just the seeds of new training camps (growing concentrated and lauded violent temperaments) & was that not someone's exact intent?

In real-time (and as perpetrated on captured children):

3/19/14, sent to the now defunct FB page of D. Cheney:
Dick Cheney,

I wonder if it's possible that there is coordination with other countries concerning enhanced interrogation techniques, in the form of training perhaps?

Specifically, here in the United States, my sense is that there may be the use of vulnerable populations, with the intension to gain favor with and/or intimidate others, especially members of the international community.

*

And:

On Saturday, June 21, 2014 6:37 AM, [redacted] wrote:
To: [redacted]

Deputy Lyddy,

Her energy is very weak. She is physically exhausted, VERY sleep deprived, and HUNGRY.

> [These were continuing experimentations in reversed-engineered SERE; the agreed upon techniques, taken from various regions of the world to be distributed to the various regions of the world, had to be deemed not torture and this is where organizations like the APA stepped in, then (during the Bush administration), and afterwards. See here for example: "And I think, you know, what's really important in the debate going forward among psychologists is the extent to which psychologists loaned their names and loaned their credentials and their Ph.D.s to this kind of activity and essentially were used by the Bush administration to provide a kind of "get out of jail free" card for the people who were, you know, doing these interrogations, because the logic, which I think Mark had mentioned, is, you know, this circular logic. So long as there are trained psychologists from the SERE program who are on site at these interrogations who are saying that these detainees can withstand this treatment, are not being harmed psychologically, then it's not torture. So, you know, you've got this sort of [inaudible] tortured — tortured logic, which is the phrase that has come up, but it's this sort of self-justifying loop in which professionals are loaning their credentials to this kind of activity. And you see the same thing in the Office of Legal Counsel, where you have, you know, lawyers loaning their credentials to approving what are clear violations of the Geneva Conventions." (https://www.democracynow.org/2009/4/21/the_story_of_mitchell_jessen_associates)]

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Fight to reopen teen sex case against Jeff Epstein may set precedent

LOCAL By Jane Musgrave - Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

UMA SANGHVI

Jeffrey Epstein, the wealthy Palm Beach resident charged with having teenage girls give him sexual massages, pleaded guilty to prostitution solicitation charges in Palm Beach County Circuit Court on June 20, 2008. (Uma Sanghvi / The Palm Beach Post)

Posted: 8:00 a.m. Saturday, August 26, 2017

WEST PALM BEACH — Nearly 10 years after billionaire Jeffrey Epstein signed a plea deal that let him escape federal prosecution on charges of sexually abusing dozens of teenage girls at his Palm Beach mansion, the 64-year-old politically-connected money manager faces the possibility that the agreement could be thrown out.

In court papers filed this month, attorneys representing two of the 30 young women prosecutors say Epstein molested lodged their final written pleas aimed at spurring U.S. District Judge Kenneth Marra to force federal officials to reopen their investigation into the sordid case.

U.S. government lawyers in September will have another chance to defend themselves against allegations that they violated the federal Crime Victims' Rights Act by failing to alert Epstein's victims of the terms of what some describe as a "sweetheart deal." Marra could make a decision as early as this fall.

The stakes for all crime victims are high, said attorneys Bradley Edwards and Paul Cassell, who filed the rare lawsuit against the federal government on behalf of two Jane Does who were 13 and 14 when they claim Epstein paid them for sex.

If Marra dismisses the lawsuit, "then the government will never have to give *any* information in *any* case to *any* victim," they wrote, urging him to uphold the provisions of the 13-year-old federal law.

At the same time, the stakes are equally high for Epstein, who has ferried President Bill Clinton on his private jet and counts celebrities, such as Britain's Prince Andrew, as friends.

Marra has already ruled that if he finds that federal prosecutors violated the act, he will consider throwing out the plea deal that Epstein signed with federal prosecutors in 2007. Miami attorney Roy Black, one of dozens of high-profile lawyers who has represented Epstein, claims that would be manifestly unfair.

As part of the unusual non-prosecution agreement, which wasn't shared with victims for nearly a year while and after it was being negotiated, federal prosecutors agreed not to pursue charges that could have sent Epstein to prison for life. In exchange, Epstein in 2008 pleaded guilty in Palm Beach County Circuit Court to two Florida criminal charges — one count each of soliciting a minor for prostitution and soliciting prostitution. He served 13 months of an 18-month sentence in a vacant wing of the county stockade — a cell he was allowed to leave 16 hours a day, six days a week.

Epstein, who now spends most of his time on his private island in the U.S. Virgin Islands, also is required to register as a sex offender for the rest of his life. In addition, as part of the plea deal, he paid roughly 30 women, who were identified by prosecutors as his victims, undisclosed amounts of money to settle civil lawsuits they had filed against him.

To throw out the deal after Epstein has been punished would rob him of his constitutional right to due process, Black wrote in court papers. "If a defendant lives up to his end of the bargain, the government is bound to perform its promises," he wrote, quoting a prior court decision.

However, Edwards and Cassell claim that because federal prosecutors didn't confer with their clients about the plea deal before it was made, they violated the law and that makes the non-prosecution agreement illegal. They cited examples where plea deals have been invalidated after judges later found prosecutors violated the crime victims' rights law.

In most of the cases they cited, the mistakes were the result of oversights. But Edward and Cassell wrote, "The undisputed facts of this case prove that, rather than forthrightly discharging its obligations to numerous child sexual assault victims, the government chose to enter into a secret deal with the man who had victimized them."

Federal prosecutors have said they didn't reveal the terms of the non-prosecution agreement because they feared Epstein and his high-powered attorneys were trying to circumvent it. Still, Edwards and Cassell, said there was no justification for the secrecy.

"The government's conduct here was particularly egregious, because it repeatedly found time to confer with attorneys for Epstein — the man who sexually abused the victims," they said of emails and meetings between federal prosecutors, including U.S. Labor Secretary Alex Acosta, who was then U.S. attorney for South Florida.

In an affidavit, Edwards said Assistant U.S. Attorney Marie Villafana, who was handling Epstein's case, had numerous chances to tell him and the young women he represented about the non-prosecution agreement. Instead, four months after the agreement was signed in September 2007, federal officials wrote victims letters, assuring them the case was still under investigation.

"This can be a lengthy process and we request your continued patience while we conduct a thorough investigation," officials wrote in a January 2008 letter to Edwards' clients.

In court papers, Villafana said she alerted Edwards the day before Epstein was to plead guilty in circuit court, hoping that Edwards, his clients and other alleged victims would attend the hearing. But Edwards said neither he nor the young women had any idea that the plea in state court meant Epstein wouldn't be prosecuted for federal crimes.

"The victims (and their attorneys) could hardly have expected that the prosecutors and the man who had sexually abused them would be working together to conceal an arrangement that would prevent his prosecution for crimes against them," Edwards and Cassell wrote.

While Judge Marra could allow a jury to decide the complex case, prosecutors are asking him to toss the women's lawsuit and end the litigation.

Edwards and Cassell instead want him to rule that prosecutors violated the Crime Victims' Rights Act. Once that determination is made, Marra could then decide what remedies to impose, the two lawyers argue.

Under the act, neither of their clients can seek "damages" from the government but the attorneys have suggested Marra could order the government to pay the women restitution, impose a monetary sanction and pay their legal fees.

Still, Cassell insisted: "This isn't about money, it's about justice."

Cassell, who is a law professor at the University of Utah, said the case is being watched closely by victims' rights advocates along with federal lawmakers who pushed the legislation through Congress and have publicly questioned prosecutors' handling of Epstein's case.

A decision ordering federal prosecutors to reopen the investigation could establish a national precedent, he said. "It will be a big win for the victims," Cassell said. "That's the way we look at it."

About the Author

JANE MUSGRAVE

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NEW: 3 things to know from Wellington council meeting Tuesday

by Kristina Webb, Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

Here are three things to know after Tuesday night's Wellington council meeting: 1. The village council held its final vote and approved the coming fiscal year's tax rate, 2.43, and $110 million budget. Though the tax rate is down from this year's 2.44, residents still will see a slight increase in their tax bills because property...

BREAKING: 27 years later, arrest in Wellington clown fatal shooting

by Hannah Winston, Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

For 27 years, investigators thought Sheila Keen had something to do with the clown who drove up to a

Wellington home with flowers, balloons and a gun, and killed 40-year-old Marlene Warren. They believed Keen was having an affair with Michael Warren, Marlene's widow. They subpoenaed her then-husband and mother-in-law.The type of balloons found...

Jealous Florida woman stabs boyfriend at block party, police say

by Sandra Nortunen, Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

A 23-year-old Florida woman upset that her boyfriend was speaking to another woman at a party decided to stab him in the chest, news reports stated. Lashamera Yvette Smith and her boyfriend were out at a bar Friday night before they ended up at a block party during the wee hours of the following day, Volusia County Sheriff's Office investigators...

Boca board to buy golf course, re-brand it as 'Boca National Golf Club'

by Lulu Ramadan, Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

A Boca Raton taxing district has city support for buying a dilapidated golf course for $24 million, with plans to revitalize and re-brand it as "Boca National Golf Club." Talk of the Greater Boca Raton Beach and Park District — a taxing body independent of the city of Boca Raton — buying Ocean Breeze Golf Club, a 27-hole course...

Trump and fellow Palm Beacher, friend Robert Kraft at odds over anthem issue

by John Bisognano, Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

The next time President Donald Trump and fellow part-time Palm Beacher Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots, share a meal at Trump's Winter White House, Mar-a-Lago, there may be some awkward moments. While the two have forged a close friendship over the years, and Kraft has donated $1 million dollars to Trump's inauguration...

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60 Years of Investigative Satire:
The Best of Paul Krassner

Introduction by Andy Borowitz

Blurb by Art Spiegelman

Click on this for a High Res Photo.

What They Say About the Author

"Paul's own writing, in particular, seemed daring and adventurous to me; it took big chances and made important arguments in relentlessly funny ways. I felt, down deep, that maybe I had some of that in me, too; that maybe I could be using my skills to better express my beliefs. *The Realist* was the inspiration that kept pushing me to the next level; there was no way I could continue reading it and remain the same."

--George Carlin

"Paul Krassner--confidant of Lenny Bruce, co-founder of the Yippies, defiler of Disney characters, publisher of *The Realist*, and investigative satirist extraordinaire. As soon as we decided to create the *Huffington Post,* I knew I wanted him involved. His irreverence was just what the blog doctor ordered."

--Arianna Huffington

"Thanks to Paul Krassner for continuing to be the lobster claw in the tuna casserole of modern America."

--Tom Robbins

"Krassner loves ironies, especially stinging ironies that nettle public figures. He would rather savor a piquant irony about a public figure than eat a bowl of fresh strawberries and ice cream."

--Ken Kesey

"I told Krassner one time that his writings made me hopeful. He found this an odd compliment to offer a satirist. I explained that he made supposedly serious matters seem ridiculous, and that this inspired many of his readers to decide for themselves what was ridiculous and what was not. Knowing that there were people doing that, better late than never, made me optimistic."

--Kurt Vonnegut

"Mr. Krassner is an expert at ferreting out hypocrisy and absurdism from the more solemn crannies of American culture."

--*The New York Times*

"Krassner has the uncanny ability to alter your perceptions permanently."

--*The Los Angeles Times*

"He has lived on the edge so long, he gets his mailed delivered there."

--*San Francisco Chronicle*

"Krassner lives in a world where Truth and Satire are swingers, changing partners so often you never know who belongs with whom."

--*Playboy*

"Perhaps the satire magazine that most closely resembles *Charlie Hebdo* in terms of inflammatory imagery was *The Realist*, created by Paul Krassner…"

--*Time*

"Paul taught me that extreme stylistic accuracy could make even the most bizarre comedic concept credible. He is a unique character on the American landscape. A self-described 'investigative satirist,' he straddles the lines between politics, culture, pornography and drugs -- in other words, the land where all of us, were we really honest with ourselves, would choose to dwell."

--Harry Shearer

"I have been a fan of his since I was a snot-nosed kid, and his words have been a driving force and influence on my life. If you have read his work before, you know the joys that you are in for. If you haven't, start reading, and consider this your lucky day. For Paul Krassner is an activist, a philosopher, a lunatic and a saint, but most of all he is funny."

--Lewis Black

Many of the pieces in this collection originally appeared in *The Realist, High Times, AVN, N.Y. Press, National Lampoon, The Nation, L.A. Times, Whole Earth Review, Huffington Post, Alternet, CounterPunch,* and *Truthdig.* Several pieces have not been published before, but only for this collection.

For George Carlin, who continues to serve as a satirical touchstone

* * *

"Hypocrisy is better than having no values at all."

--William Bennett, former education czar,
drug czar, morality czar and gambling czar

"MTV actually told us, 'You can make fun of God because he doesn't exist, but you can't make fun of Jesus because he's God's son.'"

--Vernon Chatman & John Lee,
quoted in *Satiristas!*

* * *

Other Books by Paul Krassner

How a Satirical Editor Became a Yippie Conspirator in Ten Easy Years
Best of The Realist [Editor]
The Winner of the Slow Bicycle Race
Impolite Interviews
Psychedelic Trips For the Mind [Editor]
Magic Mushrooms and Other Highs: From Toad Slime to Ecstasy [Editor]
Murder At the Conspiracy Convention and Other American Absurdities
One Hand Jerking
Tales of Tongue Fu
In Praise of Indecency: Dispatches From the Valley of Porn
Who's to Say What's Obscene: Politics, Culture and Comedy in America Today
Pot Stories for the Soul: An Updated Edition for a Stoned America [Editor]
Confessions of a Raving, Unconfined Nut: Misadventures in the Counterculture
Patty Hearst and the Twinkie Murders: A Tale of Two Trials
The Realist Cartoons [Editor]

About the Author

Paul Krassner published *The Realist* (1958-2001), but when *People* magazine labeled him "father of the underground press," he immediately demanded a paternity test. And when *Life* magazine published a favorable article about him, the FBI sent a poison-pen letter to the editor calling Krassner "a raving, unconfined nut." George Carlin responded, "The FBI was right. This man is dangerous—and funny; and necessary." While abortion was illegal, Krassner ran an underground referral service, and as an antiwar activist, he became a co-founder of the Yippies (Youth International Party). Krassner's one-person show won an award from the *L.A. Weekly*. He received an ACLU (Upton Sinclair) Award for dedication to freedom of expression. At the Cannabis Cup in Amsterdam, he was inducted into the Counterculture Hall of Fame — "my ambition," he claims, "since I was three years old." He's won awards from *Playboy*, the Feminist Party Media Workshop, and in 2010 the Oakland branch of the writers organization PEN honored him with their Lifetime Achievement Award. "I'm very happy to receive this award," he concluded in his acceptance speech, "and even happier that it wasn't posthumous."--paulkrassner.com

Introduction by Andy Borowitz

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Remembering Pubic Hair--
The Taste of Sperm—
Eating Shit For Fun and Profit—
“I Fuck Dead People” —

COMEDIANS

Remembering Lenny Bruce--
My Acid Trip With Groucho Marx--
Remembering George Carlin--
Roasting With Robin--
Remembering Dick Gregory--
The Missing Episode of Seinfeld--

THE LATER YEARS—

Are Rape Jokes Funny?
Words and Phrases That I’ve Coined—
My Brother’s Secret Space Communication Projects—
The Six Dumbest Decisions of My Life—
Alternative Facts—
I Played Thomas Jefferson’s Violin—

THE EARLY YEARS

From Carnegie Hall to *MAD* Magazine

I first woke up at the age of six.

It began with an itch in my leg. My left leg. But somehow I knew I wasn't supposed to scratch it. Although my eyes were closed, I was standing up. In fact, I was standing on a huge stage. And I was playing the violin. I was in the middle of playing the “Vivaldi Concerto in A Minor.” I was wearing a Little Lord Fauntleroy suit–ruffled white silk shirt with puffy sleeves, black velvet short pants with ivory buttons and matching vest–white socks and black patent-leather shoes. My hair was platinum blond and wavy. On this particular Saturday evening–January 14, 1939–I was in the process of becoming the youngest concert artist in any field ever to perform at Carnegie Hall. But all I knew was that I was being taunted by an itch. An itch that had become my adversary.

I was tempted to stop playing the violin, just for a second, and scratch my leg with the bow, yet I was vaguely aware that this would not be appropriate. I had been well trained. I was a true professional. But that itch kept getting fiercer and fiercer. Then, suddenly, an impulse surfaced from my hidden laboratory of alternative possibilities, and I surrendered to it. Balancing on my left foot, I scratched my left leg with my right foot, without missing a note of the “Vivaldi Concerto.”

Between the impulse and the surrender, there was a choice–-I had *decided* to balance on one foot–and it was that simple act of choosing which triggered the precise moment of my awakening to the mystery of consciousness. *This is me!* The relief of scratching my leg was overshadowed by a surge of energy throughout my body. I was being engulfed by some kind of spiritual orgasm. By a wave of born-again ecstasy with no ideological context. No doctrine to explain the shock of my own existence. No dogma to function as a metaphor for the mystery. Instead, I woke up to the sound of laughter.

I had heard that sound before, sweet and comforting, but never like this. Now I could hear a whole *symphony* of delight and reassurance, like clarinets and guitars harmonizing with saxophones and drums. It was the audience laughing. I opened my eyes. There were rows upon rows of people sitting out there in the dark, and they were all laughing together.

They had understood my plight. It was easier for them to identify with the urge to scratch than with a little freak playing the violin. And I could identify with *them* identifying with me. I knew that laughter felt good, and I was pleased that it made the audience feel good–but I hadn't *intended* to make them laugh. I was merely trying to solve a personal dilemma. So the lesson I woke up to–this totally nonverbal, internal *buzz*–would serve as my lifetime filter for perceiving reality and its rules. If you could somehow translate that buzz into words, it would spell out: *One person's logic is another person's humor*.

I finished playing "Vivaldi" by rote. Then I bowed to the audience and walked off stage. The applause continued, and I was pushed back on stage by my violin teacher, to play an encore, "Orientale." I had previously asked him–while rehearsing the encore–why it wasn't listed on the program since we already knew that I would play it at the concert. But instead of answering my question, he poked me in the chest, verbalizing each poke: "Violin *up!* Violin *up!*" Now, while playing "Orientale," I heard the echo of his voice, and I automatically raised my violin higher.

Then I popped my ears and the music sounded clearer. I wondered if it sounded clearer to the audience too. They had no idea that their laughter had woken me up. I was overwhelmed by the notion that everybody in the audience had their own individual *This-is-me*, but maybe some of *them* were still asleep and didn't know it. How could you tell who was awake and who was asleep? After all, I hadn't known that *I* was asleep, and look what I accomplished *before* I woke up. If it hadn't been for that itch, I might *still* be asleep.

There was, of course, an objective, scientific explanation for what happened on the stage of Carnegie Hall. According to a textbook, *Physiological Psychology*, “It is now rather well accepted that 'itch' is a variant of the pain experience and employs the same sensory mechanisms.” But for me, something beyond an ordinary itch had occurred that night.

It was as though I had been zapped by the god of Absurdity. I didn't even know there was such a concept as absurdity. I simply experienced an overpowering awareness of *something* when the audience applauded me for doing what I had learned while I was asleep. But it was only when they laughed that we had really connected, and I imprinted on that sound. I wanted to hear it again. I was hooked. And the first laugh was free.

A couple of decades later, as if it was inevitable, I sold a few freelance pieces to *Mad* magazine. But when I suggested a satire on the pros and cons of unions, the editor wasn't interested in even seeing it because the subject was “too adult.” Since *Mad*'s circulation had already gone over the million mark, publisher Bill Gaines intended to keep aiming the magazine at teenagers.

“I guess you don't wanna change horses in midstream,” I said.

“Not when the horse has a rocket up its ass,” Gaines replied.

And that moment served as the conception of an irreverent magazine for grown-ups, *The Realist* . . .

A Child’ s Primer on Telethons

See the tired man. He has been up all night. He is running a telethon. He wants the people to send money. It is for leukemia. That is a disease. Little children like you can catch it. Evil.

See the sexy girl. She is a singer. She doesn't know whether the telethon is for leukemia or dystrophy or gonorrhea. Her agent got her the booking. She needs the exposure. Notice her cleavage.

See the handsome man. He *does* know that it's for leukemia. You can tell. He is singing a calypso melody. Listen to the lyrics. “Give-your-money,” he sings, “to-leukemia. Give-your-money, to-leukemia.” Listen to the audience applaud. He is very talented.

See the sincere politician. He is running for reelection in November. He is against leukemia. He is willing to take an oath against it. That proves he is against it.

See the wealthy businessman. He is making a donation. He wants his company's name mentioned. Then we can buy his product. Then he will make profits. Then he can make another donation next year. Splendid.

See the little boy. He has leukemia. Too bad for him. The nice lady is holding him up to the TV camera. Aren't you glad it's not you? But wouldn't you like to be on television? Maybe you can fall down a well.

See the pretty scoreboard. It tells how much money they get. They want a million dollars. Uncle Sam has many millions of dollars. He cuts medical research funds by more than seven million dollars. Why? He needs the money for more important things.

See the mushroom cloud. That costs lots of money. It has loads of particles. They cause leukemia. Money might help to find a cure. That is why we have telethons.

See the tired man . . .

Sex Education For the Modern Catholic Child

This is a diaphragm. Women use it when they don’t want to have a baby. That is very immoral. Why, you ask? Because it is artificial, that’s why. But never fear. There are other methods to prevent conception. They are very moral. Why, you ask? Because they are natural, that’s why.

This is big brother’s pajama bottoms. He had a nocturnal emission last night. What a shame. It woke him up. But see the semen stain. It has millions of dead sperms. They were killed the natural way.

This is his sister’s sanitary napkin. It doesn’t look very sanitary any more, does it? There is an ovum somewhere in that bloody mess. But it will never be fertilized. It will be flushed down the toilet bowl. That’s the natural way, too.

This is a baby. It was born dead. Every day in the U.S.A., 136,000 infants are stillborn or die within a month. Now suppose their Mommies and Daddies had interfered artificially with the process of procreation. God’s purpose would never have been achieved. Just think what a tragedy that would’ve been. But at least some of the dead babies were baptized. That’s the natural way.

This is a special calendar. It marks off menstrual periods. That’s for the rhythm system of not having babies. A husband and his wife are in bed. They start to make love. Then they get out of bed. Because they have to look at the calendar. That’s the natural way.

This is a husband and wife who don’t want to have a baby yet. But the calendar says that the time is fertile. So they stop making love. Because one thing would lead to another. Ask [advice columnist] Dorothy Dix. She should know. She tried it once with [advice columnist] Dr. Crane. Just to prove her theory. Later she had to write to his Worry Clinic. She was worried because she missed her period. She missed it very much.

This is a husband and wife who *do* want to have a baby. But the calendar says that the time is sterile. Lucky for them they have a calendar. It saves them from having unnecessary intercourse. Unless they like to gamble on having unwanted babies. That’s the natural way.

This is a confessional booth. There is a screen in the middle. The person on one side is a priest. The person on the other side is a confessor. He is confessing that he has had evil thoughts. The priest tells him that to have an evil thought is evil. It is just as evil as committing the evil act that the evil thought is about. Priests never have evil thoughts themselves. They don’t have to. They have an ample supply of other people’s evil thoughts to draw upon.

This is the husband and his wife again. The ones who don’t want to have a baby yet. Now the calendar says that the time is sterile. How convenient. Now they can make love without stopping. And without worrying. But they’re good, consistent Catholics. And so they *are* worrying. Because they know that evil thoughts are evil. Their evil thought is to have intercourse but to avoid having a baby. They can’t be *sure* they won’t have a baby--that’s why the rhythm system is moral--but the *intention* is there. Tomorrow they will go to confession.

Postscript:

I wrote the above piece in 1958 (before the Pill), and it turned out to be theologically correct in 1984, when Pope John Paul II warned that the rhythm method of birth control can be “an abuse if the couple is seeking in this way to avoid children for unworthy reasons.”

A Child’s Primer on Fighting Communism

Now we are going to have some fun fighting Communism. Let us play a game of Make Believe. Close your eyes and concentrate. We are going to pretend that Red China doesn’t exist. They are the Bad Guys. Because they make people slaves.

Nationalist China is different. They are the Good Guys. There, hundreds of thousands of little unwanted children are sold. They work in coal mines. Then they are wanted. The older girls work in brothels. How nice to be so wanted. Open your eyes now. Anyone around our base is *it*.

Fidel Castro says Cuba is a socialist state. That proves they are Communists. But we knew it before. You could tell by the way Castro and Khrushchev hugged each other. So we stopped buying sugar from Cuba. Now other countries buy sugar from Cuba.

Iran has bought 10,000 tons of sugar from Cuba. Iran gets a lot of economic and military aid from us. So we are helping Cuba anyway. Maybe we should trade tractors for prisoners then. But we will fool them. We will put treads on all the old Edsels that didn’t sell.

There are Communists in the United States too. They are dangerous. So the Supreme Court says they have to register as foreign agents. Otherwise they have to go to jail. So they register as foreign agents. Then they have to go to jail under the Smith Act.

So the Communist Party isn’t very much fun to belong to any more. But there’s a way to belong without going to jail. You have to join the FBI first. Most of the members do it that way. J. Edgar Hoover is the head of the Communist Party.

Why are Communists such a threat to us? Because they advocate the violent overthrow of the government. That is why Governor Rockefeller wrote his name on the bottom of a new law. Now anyone who gets convicted in Federal Court for advocating the violent overthrow of the government will lose his driver’s license.

That law was passed in April 1961. But on the 4th of July holiday the United States broke all previous traffic accident records. More people got killed in cars than ever before. The roads are still full of dangerous Communist spies.

How can we defeat Communism all over the world? By foreign aid. That turns Neutral Guys into Good Guys. Meanwhile there is a great big famine in Red China. So Canada will ship wheat to them. But special machinery is needed for this. It is made in America. And the U.S. Justice Department doesn’t allow such sales. Because Bad Guys deserve to starve. Everybody knows that. Especially the Neutral Guys.

So Canada shouldn’t be mad at us. Didn’t President Kennedy plant a tree there? That’s personal diplomacy. It has nothing to do with hungry human beings in Red China. The way to avoid feeling guilty about suffering people is just don’t recognize them.

A Child’s Primer on Divorce

Oh, look. Mommy and Daddy are having another fight. Is it just an attention-getting device this time? Listen. They are having an adult discussion. They are agreeing on a separation. That means you will come from a broken home. What a shame. Even if they fight all the time they should stay together for your sake. Now you will be insecure.

Mommy and Daddy are modern people. They drink Pepsi-Cola. They also have a modern marriage. They left the word “obey” out of their wedding ceremony. Wasn’t that modern? But they didn’t leave out the words “love” and “honor.” Mommy and Daddy are only modern, not avant-garde. They left “till death do us part” in the ceremony, too. But they are going to get a divorce anyway. They don’t have to *obey* their marriage vows. Lucky thing they left out that word.

What is to be done to keep Mommy and Daddy together? The *Ladies’ Home Journal* will help. They have a regular feature in their magazine. It is called “Can This Marriage Be Saved?” Readers send in Betty Crocker boxtops and try to guess the correct answer.

Maybe Mommy and Daddy will go on television. There is a program all about *Divorce Court*. Dr. Paul Popenoe is the master of ceremonies. He wears glasses. Sometimes while the commercial is on, the actors have reconciliation. It is a real fun show.

Mommy and Daddy live in New York State. To get a divorce there, one of them has to commit adultery. Daddy has a tryst with a girl. Mommy raids the joint. She brings along a photographer. Mommy has secretly been having an affair with the photographer. What Daddy doesn’t know won’t hurt him. He always wanted to be on Page 3 of the *Daily News* anyhow. Mommy made sure that his undershorts were ironed.

Benjamin Brenner lives in Brooklyn. He is a Supreme Court Justice there. He makes decisions. He decided that raiding the joint is illegal from now on. Unless you have a search warrant. Then it’s legal, but you have to knock first and say, “Benny sent me.” This new rule doesn’t count for hotel rooms. Then it’s okay to raid the joint. So Daddy better get his own apartment. Judge Brenner is really under the thumb of real-estate agents.

There is another way. Mommy can go to Reno. She lives there for six weeks. That is called “establishing residence.” Reno is Keno but Alabama is Clamor. Same-day service. The Chamber of Commerce invites lawyers to practice there. They are promised the run of the divorce mill. More people are traveling to Alabama than ever before. They are called Freedom Riders.

Here comes the governor of New York. See him eat the potato knish. He wants to get a divorce. He will establish residence in another state. But then he can’t be governor. Instead he will get a divorce in New York. But you know what that means. Dirty, dirty. Some deserving Young Republican girl will get the assignment. This is known as political patronage. The governor has a horny dilemma, though. Either he commits scandal or he commits perjury. Maybe he will propose a new law.

RELIGION FOR DUMMIES

Pope Endorses Condoms

When I was a kid, condoms were called prophylactics, prophylactics were called rubbers, and rubbers were called scumbags. My friends and I would find used scumbags in a vacant lot or in the alley between buildings. Once, while snooping, I found a large package of unused prophylactics in my father’s sock drawer. It must have held a dozen. Now there were nine left. Each was tightly rolled, bound by a miniature cigar-like band. I selected one, took the band off, and carefully unrolled it.

There was a legend imprinted on the prophylactic: “Sold in Drug Stores Only For the Prevention of Disease.” What hypocrisy! They were sold for the prevention of *pregnancy*, which is a condition, not a disease. The irony is that now condoms *don’t* carry that message but they *are* used for the prevention of disease. Anyway, I tried to re-roll my father’s prophylactic and stuff it back into the band, but it was a losing battle, so I decided not to put it back in the package, figuring that my dad wasn’t counting his condoms and would never know.

As an adolescent, I found that purchasing condoms was a traumatic experience. I would buy other stuff to avoid being embarrassed. “I’d like a *Batman* comic book, and this Snickers candy bar, and [*whispering*] a pack of Trojans, and a tube of Crest toothpaste, please.” But four decades later there were huge billboards, warning: “If you can’t say no, use condoms.” However, an executive of the Gannett Outdoor Advertising Company confirmed that they held off putting up those signs until after a visit by the Pope.

Members of the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy have been faced with an interesting dilemma. On the one hand, they are opposed to condoms as an artificial method of birth control. On the other hand, they are aware that condoms can serve as a protection against AIDS. But a group of bishops issued a statement that educational programs which include information about condoms should also stress that they are morally incorrect.

That’s sort of like in the Watergate scandal when Richard Nixon said, “We could get the million dollars—but that would be *wrong*.”

Coincidentally, in November 2010, while the porn industry in California was being pressured to require all male actors to wear condoms to prevent AIDS, in the Vatican it was revealed that, for the exact same reason, Pope Benedict--in his official capacity as the Church’s chief spin doctor--went on record proclaiming that under some circumstances it might be acceptable for a (male) prostitute to use a condom.

“There can be single justified cases,” he rationalized, “for example, when a prostitute uses a condom, and this can be a first step toward a moralization, a first act of responsibility in developing anew an awareness of the fact that not everything is permissible and that we cannot do everything we want. However, this is not the best way to overcome the infection of HIV. It is really necessary to humanize sexuality.”

Daniel Maguire, author of *Sacred Rights: The Case for Contraception and Abortion in World Religions*, observed that the pope’s change in policy represents a significant “crack in the dike” of Catholic opposition to condom use. The opposition stems from Catholic dogma that sex is for reproduction, and nothing should interfere with that.

An issue of *The Realist* reprinted an article from the *London Observer,* which began: “Three Roman Catholic theologians have expressed the opinion that, in times of revolution and violence, it is lawful for women, particularly for nuns, to take contraceptive pills and precautions against the danger of becoming pregnant through rape.”

On that same page was our *Rumor of the Month*: “So-called ‘flying saucers’ are actually diaphragms being dropped by nuns on their way to Heaven.”

I Ran an Underground Abortion Referral Service

When abortion was illegal, women had no choice but to seek out back-alley butchers for what should have been a medical procedure in a sterile environment. If there was a botched surgery and the victim went to a hospital, the police were called and they wouldn’t allow the doctor to provide a painkiller until the patient gave them the information they sought.

In 1962, there was an article in *Look* magazine that stated, “There is no such thing as a 'good' abortionist. All of them are in business strictly for money.” But in an issue of *The Realist*, I published an anonymous interview with Dr. Robert Spencer, a truly humane abortionist, promising that I would go to prison sooner than reveal his identity.

He had served as an Army doctor in World War I, then became a pathologist at a hospital in Ashland, Pennsylvania. He went down into the shafts after a mine accident, and aided miners to obtain Workmen’s Compensation for lung disease. At a time when 5,000 women were killed each year by criminal abortionists who charged as much as $1500, his reputation had spread by word-of-mouth, and he was known as "The Saint." Patients came to his clinic in Ashland from around the country.

I took the five-hour bus trip from New York to Ashland with my gigantic Webcor tape recorder. Dr. Spencer was the cheerful personification of an old-fashioned physician. He wore a red beret and used folksy expressions like "by golly." He had been performing abortions for 40 years. He started out charging $5, and never more than $100. He rarely used the word *pregnant*. Rather, he would say, "She was *that way*, and she came to me for help."

Ashland was a small town, and Dr. Spencer's work was not merely tolerated; the community *depended* on it–-the hotel, the restaurant, the dress shop–-all thrived on the extra business that came from his out-of-town patients. However, he built facilities at his clinic for African-American patients who weren't allowed to obtain overnight lodgings elsewhere. The walls of his office were decorated with those little wooden signs that tourists like to buy. A sign on the ceiling over his operating table said *Keep Calm*.

Here's an excerpt from our dialogue:

Q. Do you have any idea about how many actual abortions you're performed during all these years?

A. To be accurate, it’s 27,006

Q. Have medical people come to you, who would otherwise shun you?

A. Oh, yes, I’ve had medical people who bring me their wives, and I’ve had quite a few medical people send me patients.

Q. But they wouldn’t perform the operation themselves?

A. No, they’d never perform it, and just exactly what their attitude would be, I don’t really know. Some of them, I presume, were absolutely against it, because I’ve had ministers, and they’d bring me their daughters or their nieces.

Q. Have police come to you for professional services?

A. Oh, yes, I’ve had police in here, too. I’ve helped them out. I’ve helped a hell of a lot police out. I’ve helped a lot of FBI men out. They would be here, and they had me a little bit scared--I didn’t know whether they were just in to get me or not.

Q. What would you say is the most significant lesson you’ve learned in all your years as a practicing abortionist?

A. You’ve got to be careful. That’s the most important thing. And you’ve got to be cocksure that everything’s removed. And even the uterus speaks to you and tells you. I could be blind. You see, this is an operation no eye sees. You go by the sense of feel and touch. The voice of the uterus. But the only thing I can see is hypocrisy, hypocrisy. Everywhere I look is hypocrisy, Because the politicians--and I’ ve had politicians in here--they still keep those laws in existence, but yet, if some friend of theirs is in trouble…

Even priests came to his clinic with the housekeepers they had impregnated. As if to retroactively approve of such hypocrisy, the *Colorado Independent* reported in 2013 that “A chain of Catholic hospitals has beaten a malpractice lawsuit by saying that fetuses are not equivalent to human lives.” Their attorneys argued that in cases of wrongful death, the term “person” only applies to individuals born alive, and not those who die in utero.

After the issue of *The Realist* featuring that interview with Dr. Spencer was published, I began to get phone calls from scared female voices. They were all in desperate search of a safe abortionist. It was preposterous that they should have to seek out the editor of a satirical magazine, but their quest so far had been futile, and they simply didn't know where else to turn.

With Dr. Spencer's permission, I referred them to him. At first there were only a few calls each week, then several every day. I had never intended to become an underground abortion referral service, but it wasn't going to stop just because in the next issue of *The Realist* I would publish an interview with somebody else.

A few years later, state police raided Dr. Spencer's clinic and arrested him. He remained out of jail only by the grace of political pressure from those he'd helped. He was finally forced to retire from his practice, but I continued mine, referring callers to other physicians that he had recommended. Occasionally I would be offered money by a patient, but I never accepted it. And whenever a doctor offered me a kickback, I refused, but I also insisted that he give a discount for the same amount to those patients referred by me.

Eventually, I was subpoenaed by district attorneys in two cities to appear before grand juries investigating criminal charges against abortionists. On both occasions I refused to testify, and each time the D.A. tried to frighten me into cooperating with the threat of arrest.

In Liberty, New York, my name had been extorted from a patient by threatening *her* with arrest. The D.A. told me that the doctor had confessed everything and they got it all on tape. He gave me until two o'clock that afternoon to change my mind about testifying, or else the police would come to take me away.

“I'd better call my lawyer,” I told him.

I went outside to a public phone booth and called, not a lawyer, but the doctor.

“That never happened,” he said.

I returned to the D.A.'s office and told him that my lawyer said to continue being uncooperative. Then I just sat there waiting for the cops.

“They're on their way,” the D.A. kept warning me. But at two o'clock, he simply said, “Okay, you can go home now.”

Bronx District Attorney (later Judge) Burton Roberts took a different approach. In September 1969, he told me that his staff had found an abortionist's financial records, which showed all the money that I had received, but he would grant me immunity from prosecution if I cooperated with the grand jury. He extended his hand as a gesture of trust.

“That's not true,” I said, refusing to shake hands with him.

If I *had* ever accepted any money, I'd have no way of knowing that he was bluffing. The D.A. was angry, but he finally had to let me go.

Attorney Gerald Lefcourt (later president of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers) filed a suit on my behalf, challenging the constitutionality of the abortion law. He pointed out that the district attorney had no power to investigate the violation of an unconstitutional law, and therefore he could not force me to testify.

In 1970, I became the only plaintiff in the first lawsuit to declare the abortion laws unconstitutional in New York State. "Later, various women's groups joined the suit," Lefcourt recalls, "and ultimately the New York legislature repealed the criminal sanctions against abortion, prior to the Supreme Court decision in *Roe vs. Wade*."

Dr. Spencer never knew about that. He had died in 1969. The obituary in the *New York Times* acknowledged the existence of his abortion clinic. The obituary in the local paper in Ashland did not.

I continued to carry on my underground abortion referral service. Each time, though, I would flash on the notion that this was my *own* mother asking for help, and that she was pregnant with *me*. I would try to identify with the fetus that was going to be aborted even while I was serving as a conduit to the performance of that very abortion. Every day I would think about the possibility of never having existed, and I would only appreciate being alive all the more.

Of course, I couldn't possibly have known the difference if my fetus had been aborted. Pretending to be the fetus was just a way of focusing on my role as a referral service. I didn't want it to become so casual that I would grow unaware of the implications. By personalizing it, I had to accept my own responsibility for each fetus whose potential I was helping to disappear. That was about as mystical as I got. Maybe I was simply projecting my own ego.

In any case, by the time these women came to me for help, they had *already* searched their souls and made up their minds. This was not some abstract cause far away–-these were real people in real distress--and I just couldn't say no. For nearly a decade, that became my fetal yoga. And, in the process, I had evolved from a satirist into an activist.

There Are No Atheists in the White House

It was God who instructed Bill O’Reilly to consider every utterance of “Happy Holidays” to be a verbalization of “the war on Christmas.” Whenever anybody claims that God talks directly to them, I think they’re totally delusional. George W. Bush is no exception. Not only was he told by his senior adviser, Karen Hughes, not to refer to terrorists as “folks,” but Bush was also being prompted by God Him-Her-or-Itself: “God would tell me, ‘George, go and end the tyranny in Iraq.’ And I did.” As if he were merely following divine orders.

In July 2003, during a meeting with Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, Bush told the newly elected leader, “God told me to strike at Al-Qaeda and I struck them, and then He instructed me to strike at Saddam, which I did. And now I am determined to solve the problem in the Middle East. If you help me, I will act, and if not, the elections will come and I will have to focus on them.”

Abu Bakar Bashir, an Islamic cleric and accused terrorist leader, has said that “America’s aim in attacking Iraq is to attack Islam, so it is justified for Muslims to target America to defend themselves.” That’s exactly interchangeable with this description of Bush by an unidentified family member, quoted in the *Los Angeles Times*: “George sees [the war on terror] as a religious war. His view is that they are trying to kill the Christians. And the Christians will strike back with more force and more ferocity than they will ever know.”

Indeed, General William Boykin, Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence, said that “George Bush was not elected by a majority of the voters in the United States, he was appointed by God.” Discussing the battle against a Muslim warlord in Somalia, Boykin explained, “I knew my God was bigger than his. I knew that my God was a real God and his was an idol.”

Apparently, religious bigotry runs in the family. Bush’s father, the former president: “I don’t know that atheists should be considered citizens, nor should they be considered patriots. This is one nation under God.” And before him, there was Ronald Reagan: “For the first time ever, everything is in place for the Battle of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Christ.” Not to mention Reagan’s Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, responsible for national policy on the environment: “We don't have to protect the environment--the Second Coming is at hand.”

In 1966, Lyndon Johnson told the Austrian ambassador that the diety “comes and speaks to me about two o’clock in the morning when

I have to give the word to the boys, and I get the word from God whether to bomb or not." So maybe there's some kind of bipartisan theological tradition going on in the White House.

But if these leaders are *not* delusional, then they're deceptive. And in order to deceive others, one must first deceive oneself until self-deception morphs into virtual reality. In any case, we have *our* religious fanatics, and they have *theirs*. In September 2007, on the eve of the sixth anniversary of 9/11, Osama bin Laden warned the American people that they should reject their capitalist way of life and embrace Islam to end the Iraq war, or else his followers would "escalate the killing and fighting against you."

George Bush once proclaimed, "God is not neutral," which is the antithesis of my own spiritual path, my own peculiar relationship with the universe--based on the notion that God is *totally* neutral--though I've learned that whatever people believe in, works for them.

My own belief in a deity disappeared when I was thirteen. I was working early mornings in a candy store across the street from our apartment building. My job was to insert different sections of the newspaper into the main section. On the day after the United States dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, I would read that headline over and over and over again while I was working. That afternoon, I told God I couldn’ t believe in him any more because--even though he was supposed to be a loving and all-powerful being--he had allowed such devastation to happen. And then I heard the voice of God:

“ALLOWED? WHY DO YOU THINK I GAVE HUMANS FREE WILL?”

“Okay, well, I’ m exercising my free will to believe that you don’ t exist.”

“ALL RIGHT, PAL, IT’ S YOUR LOSS!”

At least we would remain on speaking terms. But I knew it was a game. I enjoyed the paradox of developing a dialogue with a being whose reality now ranked with that of Santa Claus. Our previous relationship had instilled in me a touchstone of objectivity that could still serve to help keep me honest. I realized, though, that whenever I prayed, I was only talking to myself.

The only thing I can remember from my entire college education is a definition of philosophy as “the rationalization of life.” For my term paper, I decided to write a dialogue between Plato and an atheist. On a whim, I looked up Atheism in the Manhattan phone book, and there it was: “Atheism, American Association for the Advancement of.” I went to their office for background material.

The AAAA sponsored the Ism Forum, where anybody could speak about any “ism” of their choice. I invited a few friends to meet me there. The event was held in a dingy hotel ballroom. There was a small platform with a podium at one end of the room and heavy wooden folding chairs lined around the perimeter. My favorite speaker declared the Eleventh Commandment: “Thou shalt not take thyself too goddamned seriously.” Taking that as my unspoken theme, I got up and parodied the previous speakers. The folks there were mostly middle-aged and elderly. They seemed to relish the notion of fresh young blood in their movement.

However, my companions weren’t interested in staying. If I had left with them that evening in 1953, the rest of my life could have taken a totally different path. Instead, I went along with a group to a nearby cafeteria, where I learned about the New York Rationalist Society. A whole new world of disbelief was opening up to me. That Saturday night I went to their meeting. The emcee was a former circus performer who entertained his fellow rationalists by putting four golf balls into his mouth. He also recommended an anti-censorship paper, *The Independent*.

The next week, I went to their office to subscribe and get back issues. I ended up with a part-time job, stuffing envelopes for a dollar an hour. My apprenticeship had begun. The editor, Lyle Stuart, was the most dynamic individual I'd ever met. His integrity was such that if he possessed information that he had a vested interest in keeping quiet--say, corruption involving a corporation in which he owned stock--it would become top priority for him to publish. Lyle became my media mentor, my unrelenting guru, and my closest friend. He was responsible for launching *The Realist*. The masthead announced, "Freethought Criticism and Satire."

* * *

In the words of the late Jerry Falwell--who once said that God is pro-war-- "If you're not a born-again Christian, you're a failure as a human being." We salute, then, a few *successful* human beings:

*The individual who placed the winning bid of $1800 on eBay for a slab of concrete with a smudge of driveway sealant resembling the face of Jesus.

*The man who tried to crucify himself after seeing "pictures of God on the computer." He took two pieces of wood, nailed them together in the form of a cross and placed it on his living-room floor. He proceeded to hammer one of his hands to the crucifix, using a 14-penny nail. According to a county sheriff spokesperson, "When he realized that he was unable to nail his other hand to the board, he called 911.” It was unclear whether he was seeking assistance for his injury or help in nailing his other hand.

*The Sunday School teacher who advised one of his students to write on his penis, “What would Jesus do?” Presumably, “Masturbate” was not considered to be the correct answer.

*And, of course, the anonymous authors of the following quotes from various state constitutions. Arkansas: “No person who denies the being of a God shall hold any office.” Mississippi: “No person who denies the existence of a Supreme Being shall hold any office in this state.” North Carolina: “The following persons shall be disqualified for office: First, any person who shall deny the being of Almighty God.” South Carolina: “No person shall be eligible to the office of Governor who denies the existence of the Supreme Being.” Tennessee: “No person who denies the being of God, or a future state of rewards and punishments, shall hold any office in the civil department of this state.” Texas: “Nor shall any one be excluded from holding office on account of his religious sentiments, provided he acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Being.”

Rick Warren, pastor of America’s fourth-largest church, told his congregation, “I could not vote for an atheist because an atheist says, ‘I don’t need God.’ ”

In 2006, the Secular Coalition of America offered a $1,000 prize to anyone who identified the highest-ranking non-theist public official in the country. Almost 60 members of Congress were nominated, out of which 22 confided that they didn’t believe in a Supreme Being, but they wanted their disbelief kept secret. Only Pete Stark admitted that he was a nonbeliever, and in 2007, he became the first member of Congress ever to identify himself publicly as a nonbeliever.

In the week following that announcement, he received over 5,000 emails from around the globe, almost all congratulating him for his courage. “Like our nation’s founders,” he stated, “I strongly support the separation of church and state. I look forward to working with the Secular Coalition to stop the promotion of narrow religious beliefs in science, marriage contracts, the military and the provision of social services.” In 2008, he was elected to his 19th term with 76.5% of the votes.

In the 2008 primaries, three presidential wannabes raised their hands during a Republican “debate” to signify that they didn’t believe in evolution, although one of them, Mike Huckabee, admitted, “I don’t know if the world was created in six days. I wasn’t there.” He has also said that, “If there was ever an occasion for someone to have argued against the death penalty, I think Jesus could have done so on the cross and said, ‘This is an unjust punishment, and I deserve clemency.’ ”

Such western fundamentalists have been waging a battle against the teaching of meditation in publicly funded schools, as though slow, deep breathing is inextricably connected with the practice of eastern religious disciplines. What’s next, forbidding the teaching of empathy because that’s what Christians and Jews are supposed to practice?

It was a pleasant surprise when Barack Obama acknowledged “unbelievers” among others in his inauguration speech. However, I don’t exempt unbelievers from criticism.

I ridicule officially atheist China’s leaders for banning Tibet’s living Buddhas from reincarnation without permission. According to the order, issued by the State Administration for Religious Affairs, “The so-called reincarnated living Buddha without government approval is illegal and invalid.” That regulation is aimed at limiting the influence of the Dalai Lama, even though China officially *denies* the possibility of reincarnation. (I used to believe in reincarnation, but that was in a previous lifetime.)

China is a Big-Brother, slave-labor-driven, human-rights-violator, Maoist dictatorship, from which the United States borrows trillions, then proceeds to purchase their poisoned food, leaded Christmas toys, and “Made in China” American flags.

America remains a living paradox, where our citizens are force-fed misinformation and disinformation, so that we can continue to fund incompetent and illegal activities in the U.S.--even though our revolution was fought because of taxation without representation. And yet I live in this country where at least I still have complete freedom to openly condemn the government, the corporations and organized religions that continue enabling each other to reek with greed, corruption, and inhumanity.

THE SEX LIFE OF PRESIDENTS & OTHERS

The Parts Left Out of the Kennedy Book

An executive in the publishing industry, who obviously must remain anonymous, has made available to The Realist *a photostat copy of the original manuscript of William Manchester's book,* The Death of a President*. Those passages which are printed here were marked for deletion months before Harper & Row sold the serialization rights to* Look *magazine; hence they do not appear even in the so-called "complete" version published by the German magazine* Stern*.*

#

At the Democratic National Convention in the summer of 1960, Los Angeles was the scene of a political visitation of the alleged sins of the father upon the son. Lyndon Johnson found himself battling for the presidential nomination with a young, handsome, charming and witty adversary, John F. Kennedy.

The Texan in his understandable anxiety degenerated to a strange campaign tactic. He attacked his opponent on the grounds that his father, Joseph P. Kennedy, was a Nazi sympathizer during the time he was United States Ambassador to Great Britain, from 1938 to 1940. The senior Kennedy had predicted that Germany would defeat England and he therefore urged President Franklin D. Roosevelt to withhold aid. Now Johnson found himself fighting pragmatism with pragmatism. It did not work; he lost the nomination.

Ironically, the vicissitudes of regional bloc voting forced Kennedy into selecting Johnson as his running mate. Jack rationalized the practicality of the situation, but Jackie was constitutionally unable to forgive Johnson. Her attitude toward him always remained one of controlled paroxysm.

It was common knowledge in Washington social circles that the Chief Executive was something of a ladies' man. His staff included a Secret Service agent, referred to by the code name *Dentist*, whose duties virtually centered around escorting him to and from a rendezvous site-–either in the District of Columbia or while traveling--the models, actresses and other strikingly attractive females chosen by the president for his not-at-all infrequent trysts. "Get me that," he had said of a certain former Dallas beauty contest winner when plans for the tour were first being discussed. That particular aspect of the itinerary was changed, of course, when Mrs. Kennedy decided to accompany her husband.

She was aware of his philandering, but would cover up her dismay by joking, "It runs in the family." The story had gotten back to her about the late Marilyn Monroe using the telephone in her Hollywood bathroom to make a long distance call to *New York Post* film-gossip columnist Sidney Skolsky.

"Sid, you won't believe this," she had whispered, "but the Attorney General of our country is waiting for me in my bed this very minute-–I just had to tell you."

* * *

It is difficult to ascertain where on the continuum of Lyndon Johnson's personality innocent boorishness ends and deliberate sadism begins. To have summoned then-Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon for a conference wherein he, the new president, sat defecating as he spoke, might charitably be an example of the former; but to challenge under the same circumstances Senator J. William Fulbright for his opposition to Administration policy in Vietnam is considered by insiders to be a frightening instance of the latter. The more Jacqueline Kennedy has tried to erase the crudeness of her husband's successor from consciousness, the more it has impinged upon her memories and reinforced her resentment.

"It's beyond style," she would confide to friends. "Jack had style, but this is beyond style."

When Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. related to her an incident that he had witnessed firsthand-–Mr. Johnson had actually placed his penis over the railing of the yacht, bragging to onlookers, "Watch it touch bottom!" –-Mrs. Kennedy could not help but shiver with disgust. Capitol Hill reporters have observed the logical extension of Mr. Johnson boasting about his six-o'clock-in-the-morning forays with Lady Bird, to his bursts of phallic exhibitionism, whether it be on a boat or at the swimming pool or in the lavatory. Apropos of this tendency, Drew Pearson's assistant, Jack Anderson, has remarked: "When Lyndon announces there's going to be a joint session of Congress, everybody cringes."

It is true that Mrs. Kennedy withstood the pressures of publicized scandal, ranging from the woman who picketed the White House carrying a blown-up photograph supposedly of Jack Kennedy sneaking away from the home of Jackie's press secretary, Pamela Turnure, to the *Blauvelt Family Genealogy* which claimed on page 884, under Eleventh Generation, that one Durie Malcolm had "married, third, John F. Kennedy, son of Joseph P. Kennedy, one time Ambassador to England." But it was the personal infidelities that gnawed away at her–-as indeed they would gnaw away at *any* wife who has been shaped by this culture-–until finally Jackie left in exasperation. Her father-in-law offered her one million dollars to reconcile. She came back, not for the money, but because she sincerely believed that the nation needed Jack Kennedy, and she didn't want to bear the burden of losing enough public favor to forestall his winning the presidency.

Consequently she was destined to bear a quite different burden--with great ambivalence--the paradox of fame. She enjoyed playing her role to the hilt, but complained, "Can't they get it into their heads that there's a difference between being the First Lady and being Elizabeth Taylor?" Even after she became First Widow, the movie magazines would not--or could not--leave her alone. Probably the most bizarre invasion of her privacy occurred in *Photoplay*, which asked the question, "Too Soon for Love?" -–then proceeded to print a coupon that readers were requested to answer and send in. They had a multiple choice: "Should Jackie (1) Devote her life exclusively to her children and the memory of her husband? (2) Begin to date--privately or publicly--and eventually remarry? (3) "Marry right away?" Mrs. Kennedy fumed. "Why don't they give them some *more* decisions to make for me? Some *real* ones. Should I live in occasional sin? Should I use a diaphragm or the pill? Should I keep it in the medicine cabinet or the bureau drawer?" But she would never lose her dignity in public; she had too deep a faith in her own image.

* * *

American leaders seem to have a schizophrenic approach toward each other. They *want* to expose their human frailties at the same time that they do *not* want to remove them from their pedestals. Bobby Kennedy privately abhors Lyndon Johnson, but publicly calls him "great, and I mean that in every sense of the word." Johnson has referred to Bobby as "that little shit" in private, but continues to laud him for the media. Gore Vidal has no such restraint. On a television program in London, he explained why Jacqueline Kennedy would never relate to Lyndon Johnson. During that tense flight from Dallas to Washington after the assassination, she inadvertently walked in on him as he was standing over the casket of his predecessor and chuckling. This disclosure was the talk of London, but did not reach these shores.

Of course, President Johnson is often given to inappropriate response--witness the puzzled timing of his smiles when he speaks of grave matters--but we must also assume that Mrs. Kennedy had been traumatized that day and her perception was likely to have been tainted by the tragedy. This state of shock must have underlain an incident on Air Force One which this writer conceives to be delirium, but which Mrs. Kennedy insists she actually saw. "I'm telling you this for the historical record," she said, "so that people a hundred years from now will know what I had to go through."

She corroborated Gore Vidal's story, continuing: "That man [Johnson] was crouching over the corpse, no longer chuckling but breathing hard and moving his body rhythmically. At first I thought he must be performing some mysterious symbolic rite he'd learned from Mexicans or Indians as a boy. And then I realized--there is only one way to say this--he was literally fucking my husband in the throat. In the bullet wound in the front of his throat. He reached a climax and dismounted. I froze. The next thing I remember, he was being sworn in as the new president."

[Handwritten marginal notes: *1. Check with Rankin--did secret autopsy show semen in throat wound? 2. Is this simply necrophilia, or was LBJ trying to change entry wound from grassy knoll into exit wound from Book Depository by enlarging it?*]

The glaze lifted from Jacqueline Kennedy's eyes.

"I don't believe that Lyndon Johnson had anything to do with a conspiracy, but I do know this--Jack taught me about the nuances of power--if he were miraculously to come back to life and suddenly appear in front of him, the first thing Johnson would do *now* is kill him." She smiled sardonically, adding, "Unless Bobby beat him to it."

Postscript:

The most significant thing about "The Parts Left Out of the Kennedy Book" was its widespread *acceptance*--if only for a moment--by intelligent, literate people, from an ACLU official to a Peabody Award-winning journalist to members of the intelligence community who knew that sort of thing actually *does* go on. Daniel Ellsberg said, "Maybe it was just because I *wanted* to believe it so badly."

One caller claimed that he could determine, by feeding the article into a computer, whether Manchester had written the portions I published. Several individuals queried that final arbiter of truth, the *Playboy* Adviser. One reader "went out and bought the original *Death of a President* just to see if your parts would fit into the book--they did. Amazing!"

I also received a call from Ray Marcus, a critic of the *Warren Commission Report*, who had discovered a chronological flaw in my article. How could William Manchester leave something out of his book that was itself a *report* of something that he' d left out of his book? Marcus deduced that *The Realist* must have been given the excerpts by a CIA operative in order to discredit *valid* dissent on the assassination.

My favorite response came from Merriman Smith, the syndicated UPI correspondent who always ended White House press conferences with the traditional "Thank you, Mr. President." He wrote:

"One of the filthiest printed attacks ever made on a President of the United States is now for sale on Washington newsstands. The target: President Johnson. This is the May edition of a so-called magazine which says it is entered as second class mail. One newsstand owner says sales of this particular issue have been 'quite active.' This reporter is not embarked here on any defense of Johnson politically or personally, nor, for that matter, is this to suggest the need for greater respect for the presidency.

"These are matters that have been dealt with extensively in other forums. Certain unadorned facts, however, do stand out in the open circulation, mailing and other forms of distribution of this sort of slime: If a magazine of major national standing tries to use the same sort of language, federal action to stop it would be almost certain. The language referred to is not conventional hell or damn profanity––it is filth attributed to someone of national stature supposedly describing something Johnson allegedly did. The incident, of course, never took place . . ."

A Sneak Preview of Richard Nixon’s Memoir

An old friend approached us with a thick sheaf of what was purported to be a photocopy of the autobiographical manuscript on which former President Richard M. Nixon was still at work. Our first reaction was skepticism. While most of the contents dealt predictably with contemporary history as it has already been recorded, there were enough surprises to shock even our own jaded psyche.

Just to be sure, we employed the services of a reputable private investigative firm. Their report verified that our source did indeed know an individual inside the San Clemente hideaway. The next step was to hire a professional graphologist, who determined the authenticity of Mr. Nixon’s handwritten notes on the typed transcript. Finally, our attorneys assured us that there was no violation of copyright laws involved, because it was unlikely that Nixon had submitted such unfinished material for copyright protection.

The book, as yet untitled, is dedicated “To Patricia Ryan Nixon, who has been named the most admired women in the country, and deservedly so, for your loyalty has been a continuing inspiration, not only to your *husband and family, but to Americans everywhere." Here, then, are several excerpts from this preliminary draft of the memoirs of the only United States president ever to resign from office.*

#

Although President Dwight David Eisenhower encouraged me to call him Ike during the years I served as Vice President, it was a superficial form of intimacy. I regretted his failure to share decision-making responsibility with me at the White House. That privilege he reserved for his special assistant, Sherman Adams.

When media coverage of a minor scandal in 1958 involving a rug and a vicuna coat pressured him into letting Adams go, Ike at last revealed a facet of his humanity to me. "By sheer force of habit," he remarked, "I was ready to seek out Sherman's advice on whether or not I should fire him."

It was not until 1961, after Ike's farewell address, that he confided in me again, this time about a more momentous occasion. "I suppose," he began, "my reference to the dangers of the military-industrial complex in my speech came as something of a surprise to you, eh?"

"Well, sir, it did strike me as a rather incongruous position for a renowned Army general to take--"

“I had a visitation,” he interrupted, “while I was in the process of composing my farewell address—now this is utterly impossible to describe—but I do believe it was some kind of extraterrestrial communication.”

“In English or what?” I was dumbfounded.

“It was in English but also beyond all language. They told me that their associates had been to see Harry Truman when *he* was president. Now remember Dick, he’s the one who ordered the atomic bomb to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And yet these creatures convinced him not to turn Korea into another nuclear holocaust. That’s really why he brought back General Douglas MacArthur.”

Ike stared ahead with a blank expression in his eyes.

“Sir, are you all right?”

“Yes. Yes. I just don’t know if I can articulate this extraterrestrial experience. It was as though my body remained in the chair and my spirit was taken on a journey. All I know is that when I returned, I just had to tell the truth. There was no other choice--”

Ike stopped in mid-sentence. He never mentioned that incident again. Nor did I feel it would be proper for me to broach the subject. I dismissed it from my mind. It would not be until nearly fourteen years later that my *visceral* understanding of his experience would occur.

The year 1974 was so rough on me that for a while I thought I could actually be going insane. I wondered if I was being drugged without my knowledge. I found myself wallowing in paranoid fantasies, and I gave voice to these at press conferences. I expressed the fear that my plane might crash. I resorted to using expressions like “They can point a gun at your head.” I was practically begging for mercy.

When I entered Memorial Hospital Medical Center in Long Beach on October 23 for my phlebitis condition, I brought my own jar of wheat germ, because I was afraid that poison would be put in my food.

On October 29, the doctors placed a clamp on a vein in my pelvis in order to prevent the blood clot from moving to my lungs where it could have killed me. It was then that I went into cardiovascular failure.

On October 30, Ron Ziegler announced, “We almost lost President Nixon yesterday afternoon.” This was almost three months after my resignation, and he was still referring to me as President. “Poor Ron,” I thought to myself. “He thinks he’s still in Disneyland.”

For a few hours I was considered to be clinically dead. It was an incredibly ecstatic feeling. I was conscious, but on some other plane of existence, and there was an overwhelming temptation to remain in that blissful limbo. Yet there was also something in me that kept saying “Don’t give up!” It was my survival instinct speaking.

But why not give up? What was there left for me? The answer came to me by the same extraterrestrial path it had come to Ike: *Tell the truth!* That was the turning point of my life. And these memoirs are the tangible result of my transformation. No one shall be spared, least of all myself.

Those hairless creatures told me that President John F. Kennedy had also been visited by their kind. His father, old Joe Kennedy, had gotten rich off illegal booze during Prohibition, and you can be certain that the underworld bootleggers he was tied up with were not about to dissolve their silent partnership in this huge liquor industry they had built up, simply because Prohibition had been repealed. Yet there was Joe Kennedy’s own son, Jack—not to mention his brother Bobby—refusing to cooperate any longer in allowing organized crime to have a comeback in Cuba, and furthermore, going after organized crime in *this* country. At best this was ingratitude; at worst it was treason.

But I finally understood the extraterrestrial force that had motivated young Kennedy. And so now I am ready to peel away the final layers of my poker-face mask.

For example, I occasionally went too far while wearing my anti-Communist mask. When former Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach exposed the DuBois Clubs as a Communist front organization, poison-pen letters and threatening telephone calls were received by many of the Boys Clubs from patriotic Americans who were understandably confused by the ostensibly coincidental pronunciations. But in my function as National Board Chairman of the Boys Clubs of America, I charged that the name choice was "an almost classic example of Communist deception and duplicity" and that the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs "are not unaware of the confusion they are causing among our supporters and among many other good citizens."

In retrospect, however, I admit that this was a slightly foolish position to espouse.

* * *

In August of 1945, while I was still serving in the Navy, stationed in Maryland, there was a Committee of 100 seeking—according to an advertisement they placed in several California newspapers—a candidate for Congress "with no previous political experience, to defeat a man who has represented the district in the House for ten years." This was a reference to Jerry Voorhis.

I did not see the ad, but destiny acted as though I had answered it, when I was contacted by Murray Chotiner for Herman Perry, vice president of the Bank of America. Perry later became vice president of the Western Tube Corporation, a CIA front located in the Whittier Bank of America building. But now he wanted to know only if I was a Republican and if I was available.

My responses were both affirmative.

It was Perry who brought me out for an extremely brief meeting with Howard Hughes. Hughes was handsome, dynamic, self-assured. Somehow he had seen the FBI dossier on me, which had apparently been compiled when I applied for a position with the Bureau after graduating law school. Oddly enough, I had never heard back from the FBI directly.

"Nixon," he addressed me, "you have a magnificent political future ahead. You will be able to steer your ship independently. But always keep it in a tiny compartment of your mind that you do not own the ocean. I do."

I never saw Howard Hughes face to face again.

* * *

The seeds of my distrust of the Justice Department were sown in 1948 during the Alger Hiss case. Those people just sat on each other's hands. If not for the work of our House UnAmerican Activities Committee, the prosecution would never have been so successful.

I refused to turn over to those bunglers the microfilms we had in evidence. When there was a possibility I might be cited for contempt, I raised the point of what a dangerous precedent could be set, since here I was, a U.S. Congressman, appearing voluntarily before a grand jury.

But the truth of the matter was that those microfilms were copies of documents forged on an old Woodstock typewriter that had been specially constructed to resemble—to have the same peculiarities as—the typewriter that had actually belonged to Alger Hiss’s wife, Priscilla.

Then Whittaker Chambers hid these “old” 1938 microfilms inside a pumpkin on his pumpkin farm. The trouble was, the Eastman Kodak people stated that the type of film we used was not manufactured by their company until 1945.

To this day, whenever the comic strip *Peanuts* mentions that bird named Woodstock or the mysterious “pumpkin papers,” I suspect Charles Schulz is trying to remind me of something.

* * *

There seems to be a tradition of accusing those who fight Communism of being homosexual. This smear tactic was used against

Whittaker Chambers, against Senator Joseph McCarthy and against J. Edgar Hoover. In that vein, gossips used to rant about Hoover and Clyde Tolson double-dating with Charles “Bebe” Rebozo and myself.

Neither Rebozo nor I are “gay.” We have been very close friends since 1950. What we enjoy most about each other’s company is the fact that small talk becomes unnecessary. We are not afraid of silence. But we have never had any kind of sexual relationship.

We were introduced by Senator George Smathers, who was infamous for supplying female companions to his fellow legislators. It was Smathers who eventually sent Mary Jo Kopechne to be with Senator Edward Kennedy.

Whenever I was in Florida, I would stay with Bebe, and he would occasionally get a couple of beautiful $200-a-night girls. Or as they would be called nowadays, $200-a-night women. But when I bought my own home in Key Biscayne, then his yacht became our rendezvous site.

I was certainly not promiscuous, but I had been a virgin until marriage. I proposed to Pat Ryan the very same night I met her. She refused, but I was a determined son-of-a-gun. I even drove her to Los Angeles when she dated other men while I waited in the wings. I finally charmed her with my perseverance and self-effacement.

Once I express concern to Bebe that word might get out about my "affairs" in Key Biscayne. "These girls," I pointed out, "are likely to brag about going to bed with a United States senator."

"They' re professionals," Bebe reassured me. "It' s just like your lawyer-client privilege. Stop worrying."

* * *

One evening in 1949, while I was still serving in Congress, I received an anonymous call at my home. A male voice said three words, "Watch Jeane Dixon," and hung up the telephone.

A week later, the psychic Jeane Dixon held a press conference. One of the reporters asked her to predict my future. She drew a blank, however, explaining that she needed time to meditate. I believe that in show business parlance this is known as "milking the audience." Finally she said it: "I predict that one day Richard Nixon will become president of the United States."

I could only conclude that the higher source from which she had received her intelligence was not necessarily supernatural. When I lost the presidential election to John F. Kennedy in 1960, Jeane Dixon *continued* to predict that I would be president. "Destiny," she said, "cannot be denied."

Even after I was defeated in the 1962 California gubernatorial election and announced that I was through with politics, she said, "Richard Nixon has not even *begun* his rise in politics." And then she predicted the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963.

After the Watergate affair, she stated: "God gave us Richard Nixon to divide us, to test us where our faith is concerned, to see if we could come together." A local paper published her statement ("God gave us Nixon to divide us.—Jeane Dixon") as the caption for a cartoon showing a cloud with the voice of God saying, "Don't blame me—I voted for McGovern." I had to admit it was funny, even though she had been quoted out of context.

* * *

Harry Robbins "Bob" Haldeman came into my life when I was a senator in 1951. He volunteered to work on my vice presidential campaign the next year, but that campaign was not to be for him, so he tried again in 1956, and this time we took him on. He rose to be my chief advance man for the presidential race in 1960.

After my defeat, Haldeman remained loyal. He volunteered to help me with my book, *Six Crises*. I wrote the chapter on the 1960 campaign myself because it was so fresh in my mind. Al Moscow drafted four other chapters with Haldeman—this was not ghostwritten material because I rewrote what they presented—and Haldeman worked mostly on the Alger Hiss chapter.

He was apparently so eager to please, though, that he screwed up on his research. He had it that the FBI found the old Woodstock typewriter. And the book was published that way. Then the facts came out, the trial records and all, and we had to change it for the paperback edition. So now it reads that the FBI was *unable* to find the typewriter.

The truth is, Alger Hiss found it himself. But the FBI had *planted* this fake Woodstock typewriter. And then the *defense* presented it in the trial as what they *assumed* was evidence in their favor. So a least Hiss was found guilty of perjury.

That verdict added immeasurably to my political strength. I had the courage of Alger Hiss' s conviction and it served as the magic carpet that transported me from the Congress to the Senate to the vice presidency. I would have had the presidency in my pocket if not for Kennedy' s performance in the Great Debates—but only on television; I fared better on radio. Kennedy' s charisma was the variable that none of us had counted on.

* * *

How strange that the incident from the entire eight years I spent as Vice President that stands out most prominently in my memory occurred not in the White House but in Peru. There was a rioter who spat on me, and it was with great pleasure that I kicked him in the shins.

Back in the safety of our hotel that night, I recalled an early formal debate at Whittier College— "Resolved: that insects are more beneficial than harmful" —because I had been so intrigued as to how insects did not think, they just acted. Now, having myself acted totally without hesitation, I was able to identify with those insects.

As Vice President, I labored diligently behind the scenes to establish Operation 40, by which our CIA covertly trained Cuban intelligence officers in exile. Operation 40 was to serve as our link between the White House and the CIA in April of 1961. My plan was to invade Cuba.

Ironically, during the 1960 presidential campaign, Kennedy began advocating *my* plan. I could not reveal that it was *already* in effect because Operation 40 was a *secret* project. Further, I found myself in the schizophrenic position of attacking my own idea whenever Kennedy articulated it, because it violated our treaty commitments.

* * *

Of all the professional newscasters I have met, Walter Cronkite of CBS was the most charming. He treated me with respect and dignity. After the broadcast interview, we sat in his anteroom and talked informally.

“I’ve always wanted to thank you,” he said, “for inadvertently bringing me back to sanity that horrible weekend John Kennedy was killed.”

“Oh, really—how so?”

“This followed on the heels of the televised shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald by Jack Ruby. A journalist asked for your reaction, and you replied with a slip of the tongue, ‘Two rights don’t make a wrong.’ Before you could correct yourself, I was finally able to break through my depression with a bit of laughter.”

“Yes, those were muddled times. Do you know I *forgot* where I was the day the assassination took place? I had to tell the FBI I couldn’t remember, and it was not until later that I remembered I had been in Dallas, of all places. There was a convention of the American Bottlers of Carbonated Beverages, and I was there representing Pepsi-Cola. But I flew out of there at eleven o’clock that morning. Kennedy was shot around one o’clock, as I recall. Where were *you* that day?”

“In my office,” Cronkite said. “When we got the word from Bethesda that he had passed, I cried openly.”

“And you’re supposed to be objective,” I teased him. “I didn’t realize you were that much of a Kennedy supporter.”

“Well, by that time I was crying because it had also come over the wires that Lyndon Johnson was already preparing to be sworn in as the new president.”

It was encouraging to find that in person this superstar really was just like your favorite uncle.

* * *

When Robert Kennedy was attorney general in 1962, he was busy checking out the Hiss case for some reason. Of course, he discovered that the FBI never had the Woodstock typewriter.

Then, in 1968, when he was running for president, he approached New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison to be *his* attorney general. Garrison had gotten a lot of publicity due to his investigation of the assassination of Bobby’s brother.

During that campaign, Howard Hughes dispatched Robert Maheu to visit me. Hughes felt strongly that the Vietnam War should continue—he had a huge defense contract for helicopters—yet at the same time he wanted a halt to underground nuclear testing, presumably because it upset the roulette wheels in his Las Vegas casinos.

I mentioned the Bobby Kennedy information to Maheu, and he said, "Uh-oh, the boss will have to keep a sharper eye on *him*."

It was poetic irony that while Bobby Kennedy was giving official permission to J. Edgar Hoover to spy on Martin Luther King, I was giving unofficial permission to Hoover to spy on *Kennedy*. That is to say, Robert Maheu may have been working for Howard Hughes, but he had also continued working for the FBI. So when he referred to "the boss," I asked, "Which one?"

Maheu smiled and held up his arms, two fingers from each hand extending up into the air. "Both," he said. This was the exact moment I decided to use that gesture for the crowds.

Winston Churchill had used the V-sign to signify Victory. Then the antiwar protesters perverted its meaning to signify Defeat. Now I was restoring its original victorious symbolism by co-opting the co-opters. Or so I believed.

* * *

The problem was that Lyndon Johnson desperately wanted to have the Vietnam War settled before he left office. Whereas, I am ashamed to admit, we were trying to prolong it.

Anna Chennault—the Dragon Lady, as we called her—was our liaison to South Vietnamese government officials. Her task was to dissuade their ambassador to the U.S, Bui Diem, from attending the Paris peace talks.

But LBJ got wise to this. I had to call and cajole him personally. He was absolutely furious. He complained bitterly at how "shit-kickin' pissed off" he was. "Thieu is *our* boy," he shouted, "and don' t you fuckin' forget that!"

On November 1, 1968, only four days before the American election, President Nguyen Van Thieu announced that Saigon was pulling out of the peace talks. The Dragon Lady had obviously convinced his associates that they would obtain a juicier deal under our new administration than under Johnson or his chosen successor, Hubert Humphrey, who would surely have won if the Democrats had ended the war.

And so, because it was in the mutual interest of the South Vietnamese and the Republicans to extend the war for several more years, we became the recipients of kickbacks from our own government’ s aid to the Saigon government.

I do not ask for forgiveness. No, rather I must live with the memory of myself as an idealistic adolescent first reading about the Teapot Dome scandal and saying to my mother, while helping her to mash the potatoes, “I would like to become an honest lawyer who can’ t be brought by crooks.” But my character had already been set. When I was only five years old, my mother intended to buy me a copy of *The Prince and the Pauper*, but she asked a bookstore clerk for *The Prince*, and so of course he gave her Machiavelli’ s book. Mo mother was a saint. Her little mistake changed my life, and I will always be grateful for what I feel must have been a touch of divine intervention.

* * *

We created a couple of Frankenstein monsters, and when I say we, I mean the administration and the media in an unintentional collaboration.

One such monster was Martha Mitchell. The first time she made one of her famous telephone calls and we saw how the press ate it up, we realized we had a political gold mine. The wife of the attorney general could serve as our mouthpiece for floating various trial balloons.

John Mitchell would get thoroughly briefed on whatever the issue was—Haiphong Harbor or Senator Fulbright or the need for increased spending—and then, without ever letting Martha know that he *expected* her to give a scoop to some lucky reporter that evening, John would simply smoke his pipe and just happen to engage her in casual conversation about the matter.

Martha was much too strong-willed to be *instructed* to make a call, but she could be counted on to make the call, even if it was three o'clock in the morning when the urge hit her. This was a great joke among the reporters. One little news item quoted her latest pronouncement, and after the quote that sentence was completed with, "Martha Mitchell confided to the *Washington Star* yesterday…" Confided, indeed—to a *newspaper*.

But in the process of becoming a public character, she developed many contacts in the media. By the time her husband became my campaign manager, Martha Mitchell was already a household word. We thought she would prove to be a wonderful asset until she started blabbing about Watergate.

Another Frankenstein monster we created was Henry Kissinger. I never really wanted him in the first place. He had insulted me publicly when I received the nomination in '68. But I made an agreement with

Nelson Rockefeller that if he would actively support me, I would take Kissinger onto the team, and of course I had to keep my word.

We all felt somewhat uncomfortable about his German accent. H.R. Haldeman decided that whenever Kissinger made any statement, his picture could be shown on TV but there would be no audio. And the electronic media cooperated.

Meanwhile, we built up his image, got him dates with glamorous movie stars—Jill St. John, Marlo Thomas, Liv Ullmann—until he became known as a harmless, pudgy playboy. Then it was acceptable for his voice to be heard.

"Henry," I once remarked to him, "there' s a rumor going around Washington that you' re lousy in bed."

"Mr. President" —speaking very slowly and distinctly— "I can only say that . . . *power* . . . is the ultimate aphrodisiac."

And he just kept glaring at me with those worried-looking eyebrows frowning over his spectacles. This was just three days after our destabilization of the Chilean government. Kissinger wanted all the credit, but it was really a team effort.

We could not have succeeded, for example, without the invaluable aid of Teamsters Union President Frank Fitzsimmons and his Bob Hope-like timing in manipulating the truckers' strike in Chile. It is possible to bring about the collapse of an entire economy by shutting down one integral aspect, especially communications or transportation.

Moreover, the Soviet Union was trying to cut off the United States' supply of a metal vital to jet engine production, by their support of the Allende government in Chile and also by backing guerrilla actions in Angola. In order to maintain the war in Vietnam, we needed Chilean copper as well as the trace metal. At any rate, we were a smooth, well-oiled team, on the way to winning the whole, beautiful, global game.

* * *

In 1968, George Wallace ran for president as the candidate of the American Independent Party. This almost lost me the election to Hubert Humphrey. In 1972, Wallace ran for president again. This almost cost him his life. I honestly have no knowledge as to how long Arthur Bremer was in our employ, but I do know that the cover story of his having stalked me before he went after Wallace was fabricated simply to defuse any suspicion that might have pointed to our role in the tragic event.

After all, my supposed public mandate that November came from a majority that included twenty million votes that would otherwise have gone to George Wallace. We had not expected him to pose so much of a threat. In fact, we had already taken certain steps to preclude any such possibility. In 1970, immediately after he became governor of Alabama again, the iRS and the Justice Department launched an investigation of Wallace and his brother Gerald for tax evasion and other forms of financial corruption.

I don’ t fault Wallace for family loyalty, by the way. I have carried out similar filial responsibility to my own brother, Donald. This is only natural.

In any event, John Mitchell, still attorney general at the time, came to me early in 1971 and said, “We’ ve got to stop George Wallace. He could force the election into the House of Representatives if he runs on a third party ticket again.”

In May of that year, I was in Mobile and invited Wallace to fly with me on the presidential plane to Birmingham. En route, we shook hands on an agreement. I promised that Mitchell would call off the investigation of Wallace and his brother—although their underlings would still be subject to prosecution—and the governor in turn promised me that if he ran in ’ 72 it would only be as a Democrat.

In August 1971, we discovered that CBS correspondent Daniel Schorr had been asking around about the possibility of such a deal. Haldeman commented, “We’d better get on *his* ass—fast.”

Two years later, when Schorr reported that John Dean was afraid of going to prison because he might get raped there, we were able to find out immediately from the FBI that his source was Dean’s own attorney, but there was nothing constructive we could do with that information.

However, it must be noted for posterity that John Dean was a closet queen supreme. His lovely wife, Maureen, is merely window dressing. Oh, how neatly she rolled up her blond tresses into a perfect bun and sat behind him at the Watergate hearings every day, blatantly projecting a modern-day American Gothic image. I recall how it came out that Dean had taken almost $5,000 from a White House safe for a hurried honeymoon right smack in the middle of the cover-up, He was already disguising his tracks. Their marriage was purely protective coloration.

The case of John Dean does raise the question, when is a so-called leak actually convenient propaganda?

Maureen Dean was an on airplane flight when she “accidentally” dropped her purse and spilled a vial of amyl nitrate capsules on the floor. She explained to the man sitting net to her how wonderful these were for enhancing her sex life with John. Is it not possible that this lady was protesting just a mite too much, particularly to someone who would just happen to let the media in on her secret?

No wonder G. Gordon Liddy said that John Dean was qualified to sing the title role in *Der Rosenkavalier*—because it is sung by a woman. Liddy once made a remark in German that I asked him to translate for me. He said, “John Dean’s priorities are all screwed up. He doesn’t know whether he wants to go down in history or down on a historian.”

* * *

Young people might use the expression “karma returning” to describe a deal we made with Jack Anderson, who had himself exposed the corruption of so many others in his syndicated column for the *Washington Post*.

We were tipped off that Anderson was researching the Dragon Lady connection. He had learned that her late husband, General Claire Chennault, who had commended the Flying Tigers in World War II, had in 1946 formed a private commercial airline that later merged with the CIA’s Air America.

He also learned that our Dragon Lady was currently profiting from a Pepsi-Cola factory I had established in Laos, but which had never spewed forth a single drop of Pepsi. Air America had been shuttling out its *actual* product: heroin.

However, Anderson agreed not to publish this material. In return, we agreed not to publicize the fact that he knew about the Watergate break-in weeks before it occurred. He had warned Lawrence O’Brien at Democratic National Committee headquarters, but O’Brien remained silent because he assumed that such a scandal would provide ammunition for a Democrat *coup* in the ’72 election. He overestimated public outrage.

Anderson held back because he did not wish to endanger his source, one of the “burglars,” Frank Sturgis, whom he had known for some twenty years. Shortly after my resignation in 1974, I received a long letter from Sturgis. I shall quote here a portion of that correspondence:

> Now, I’m telling you this because I still consider you my Commander in Chief. I realize that the same faction of the CIA that masterminded the assassination of Kennedy was also behind your downfall. They thought JFK was soft on Communism in Cuba, and that you were soft on Communism in China, but that they didn’t necessarily have to kill you to get rid of you.
>
> While I participated in Operation 40, our job was primarily to infiltrate foreign countries. I was a member of the Assassination Section. Orders would filter down, and our job would be to kill, say, a military official or a politician. Even in those days, unstated policy included domestic as well as foreign enemies.
>
> But I had nothing to do with the Kennedy assassination myself. The FBI came to interview me the day after it happened, and I didn’t have a thing

to tell them, except that I could agree with their speculation that the motive was revenge for the Bay of Pigs failure. There’s no doubt in my mind that if you had been elected in 1960, the invasion would have been completely successful.

For a while I believed that Bernard Barker was the double agent in Watergate, but I have since come to the conclusion that our leader, James McCord, was guided to do the things he did by certain officials in the CIA. We were definitely set up. They used us to eventually destroy the office of the presidency. You were just as expendable as Kennedy.

I shouldn’t have been surprised Mr. McCord was our Security Chief. I myself, as an infiltrator of Castro’s inner circle, rose to Director of Security for the Cuban Air Force and Director of Intelligence. Who can you trust?

Whereas I agree with Frank Sturgis that the Watergate burglars were “set up,” I question the reason he gives. The CIA was fully aware that relations with the People’s Republic of China were bound to open up sooner or later. And of course I wanted to earn credit for that in history.

Rather, I am convinced that there was a power struggle *within* the Agency. The “faction” to which Sturgis alludes—most likely led by CIA’s Richard Helms—was jealous of the Special Intelligence Unit we had developed inside the White House.

* * *

Not only was the Watergate break-in deliberately bungled in order to discredit me, but the White House taping system was never part of my domain. I knew it had been installed by the Secret Service, but I lacked access to the tapes and, more important, to any switch that would shut off a recording device.

I was a prisoner in the Oval Office. A mobile prisoner, to be sure—I could go to the Cabinet Room or the Lincoln Room—but it didn’t make any difference; there were bugs everywhere. They even bugged my cabin at Camp David. I was under more surveillance than Larry O’Brien could ever imagine.

If I had the tapes in my possession, don’t you think I would have gotten rid of them? Just the way I did with those microfilms in the Hiss case. Everybody was recommending this—from John Connally to Chuck Colson—but I simply did not have access to the system.

I should explain that “Bay of Pigs” was our code word for the assassination of President Kennedy. When we were attempting to put the brakes on the FBI investigation of Watergate, I told Haldeman to get word to Helms that otherwise, because of E. Howard Hunt’s involvement, the whole Bay of Pigs thing would open up.

Hunt was the CIA station chief in Mexico when agent Lee Harvey Oswald made contact there in 1963. The whole world already knows what a fiasco the Bay of Pigs operation turned out to be—that is, the invasion of

Cuba—but because Kennedy didn’t keep his campaign promise to support the exiles, he then became the prime “Bay of Pigs” target.

Had the Watergate mission not been aborted, Hunt would have continued to simulate documents blaming Kennedy and Ted Sorensen for the murder of Che Guevara, just as he forged those cables blaming Kennedy for the murder of Ngo Dinh Diem.

I hasten to add that Hunt was merely *clarifying* the issues. The Kennedy Administration was responsible. But what we were trying to do was hurt *Ted* Kennedy’s chances if he decided to run. However, that is guilt by relationship, which is wrong and irrelevant.

* * *

I was convinced that Nelson Rockefeller was behind it all. He had never forgiven me for defeating him for the Republican nomination in 1968. What with that whole 25th Amendment arrangement, I figured their chronological plan was to:

1. Get Spiro Agnew out of office.
2. Replace him with Gerald Ford.
3. Get me out of office.
4. Replace me with Ford.
5. Replace Ford (as vice president) with Rockefeller.

6. Knock off Ford before the election by Squeaky Fromme, Sara Jane Moore, whoever.

7. Replace Ford again with Rockefeller, declare martial law and cancel the election. Alternatively, this could be done by killing Jimmy Carter before the inauguration.

Now I realize how naïve I was. Granted, Carter is more progressive than I am—after all, politics is the art of finding a balance between the status quo and the force of evolution—but it became crystal clear to me that he had made some kind of deal. The intelligence-gathering system knew about G. Harrold Carswell' s tragic gay problem. Now, *he* would have been a fine prospect for blackmail: "We have this photo of you and a friend in the men' s room, Justice Carswell, but don' t worry, we won' t leak it." I wonder, if I had been successful in appointing him to the Supreme Court, how would he have voted on the constitutionality of entrapping homosexuals? Anyway, my suspicions were aroused when it did not come out in the media until *after* the election—immediately before Carter' s inauguration when it was too late to do us any good—that his son Jack had been discharged from the Navy because of marijuana.

Our hammer over George McGovern' s head in 1972 was that his daughter had been hospitalized for an LSD freakout. We never had to resort to using that particular bit of intelligence, however, despite the fact that it was *we* who had arranged for her to be "dosed" in the first place.

* * *

Woodward and Bernstein were not the only ones with reliable sources. According to one of my contacts in the intelligence community, the Democrats' first choice for a presidential candidate in the 1976 elections was a southern governor—Askew of Florida—but their analysts calculated that Jimmy Carter's resemblance to Howdy Doody would provide a subconscious association in the minds of voters who were weaned on that folksy puppet.

What the American public does not realize is the impact of the long-range planning that goes on in think tanks such as Stanford Research, the Rand Corporation and the Hudson Institute. They are already beginning to orchestrate the Bimillennium, the 2000th birthday of Christ. The function of Jimmy Carter—with all his religiosity and his talk about not living in sin—is to provide an opening wedge for the Christianization of the United States. The arms manufacturers would be well pleased by a repeat performance of the Crusades. After those Korean bribes via Reverend Moon's Unification Church and the brainwashing of the Moonies, they'll finally figure it's time to make Christ an *American* again.

Incidentally, Billy Graham recently tried to convert me, the same way he did with that professional gangster, Mickey Cohen. "Think what it would be like," he sad, "if you were to go on an evangelistic tour with Eldridge Cleaver and Colonel Sanders."

"You mean the Kentucky Fried Chicken guy?"

"Yes, he has been born again too."

"No, thank you, Billy, I seem to have found serenity in my own way."

I truly have been able to gain real humility now that Chuck Colson and Susan Atkins are saying the same things about Jesus Christ that they were once saying about myself and Charles Manson, respectively.

* * *

History is an unending conveyor belt that either perpetuates or corrects the inaccuracies of the past.

Therefore, the first thing I wish to point out, concerning that infamous eighteen-and-a-half-minutes gap in the White House tape of June 20, 1972, is that it actually lasted only eighteen-and-a-quarter-minutes. At 10:30 that morning, John Ehrlichman was in my office. We did not discuss Watergate. Before leaving, however, he handed me two sealed envelopes. One contained a gram of cocaine; the other contained a preliminary report on the surveillance of Woodward and Bernstein. This task had been assigned to Tony Ulasewicz immediately after their first story on the break-in was published in the *Washington Post*.

It was strange. Ehrlichman’s own first assignment had been to spy on the Nelson Rockefeller people for us during the 1960 campaign, and now he had his own chain of command. I have noticed that Ehrlichman’s brow has become more knitted as he has advanced in his career. When he left, I opened the sealed envelope and read the report. It was brief:

Bernstein, Carl: Heavy pot smoker. Living apart from his wife. Began affair with Nora Ephron, Esquire *columnist, in New York while her husband, Dan Greenburg, book author, was at EST, Erhard Seminar Training.*

Woodward, Bob: A loner. Clean as a hound’s tooth. So far.

Then I began to “chop the coke,” as they say, with a razor blade. When Bob Haldeman entered, we each took a couple of snorts. Haldeman was my Sherman Adams. I had always felt I could depend on him. We were discussing whether my itinerary for an upcoming trip to the West Coast might include Ely, Nevada, which was the birthplace of Mrs. Nixon,

“That’s perfect,” Haldeman said. “We need anything we can get, PR-wise.”

“But you know something, Bob? It’s all image.”

“Well, that is precisely the *purpose* of public relations.”

“No, I mean my so-called marriage is all image. Pat and I have not, you know, slept together for many years. My God, I was the President of the Unites States, and I couldn’t even get laid by my own wife.”

“Sir, you don’t really want to talk about this--”

“And I’ll tell you where it started. During the Cuban Crisis in October ’62. Boy, Kennedy sure won a helluva lot of points on that one. And it could’ve been *me* confronting Khrushchev. I mean a real international shootdown, not just waving my finger at him in Safire’s goddamn makeshift kitchen.”

“That would have been the logical extension of your Russian trip.”

“I tell you, the unspeakable frustration of not being in a position to negotiate that missile thing. I just couldn’t get it up for Pat, plus the pressure of the California campaign was going on then too. And after we lost that election, she started talking about a divorce. We compromised with separate bedrooms.”

Suddenly I stood up, walked around my desk to where Haldeman was sitting, and I ran my hand back and forth across the top of his crewcut. I am not very physically demonstrative, but I had always wanted to do that. Still, this was almost a spontaneous gesture.

"You stuck by me, Bob," I said while I rubbing his hair. "Finch dropped out, but you . . . " And I began weeping uncontrollably.

"Sir, is there anything I can do?"

Between sobs I blurted out, "Oh, sure" —I certainly did not intend for this to be taken literally— "Why don' t you try sucking my cock, maybe *that' ll* help."

To my utter astonishment, Haldeman unzipped my fly and proceeded with what can only be described as extreme efficiency. The whole thing could not have taken more than five minutes from beginning to end. He must have had some practice during his old prep-school days. Neither of us said a word—before, during or after.

This misunderstanding was comparable to the time that Jeb Magruder remarked how convenient it would be if we could get rid of Jack Anderson, and G. Gordon Liddy assumed that was a direct order and rushed out to accomplish the act. If Liddy had not blabbed his "assignment" to an aide in the corridor, Anderson might not be alive today.

As for my own motivation, here was an experience not of homosexuality but of power. I realized that if I could order the Pentagon to bomb Cambodia, it was of no great consequence that I was now merely permitting my chief of staff to perform fellatio on me. In fact, I was fully cognizant of what an honor it must have been for him.

When the incident was over, I simply returned to my desk, and although the tension of vulnerability was still in the air, we resumed our discussion as if nothing had occurred.

“Now,” I said in a normal tone of voice, “what’s on the agenda?”

“Sir,” Haldeman began, “on this Watergate problem, it would be advantageous to us if any similar activity on the part of the Democrats could be leaked to the media.”

“Well, Hoover once told me—this was right after we won in ’68—he said that within the previous month, LBJ had the FBI put the bug on Agnew and me. Ramsey Clark was attorney general then, but he never authorized it, so that was an *illegal* wiretap.”

“Perfect. We start with Lyndon Johnson and work our way back.”

“But no, on second thought, the LBJ tap would open up the whole Dragon Lady can of beans. I mean that was the goddamn *excuse* they had for spying on us.”

Then Haldeman delivered a resounding pep talk—when he lets loose he can be an emotional marvel—about the importance of launching a counterattack against our enemies.

I must say at this point that Rose Mary Woods deserves a Medal of Honor for the way she was willing to humiliate herself by taking full blame for accidentally erasing those first five minutes rather than stand by while my public image was being destroyed.

Moreover, when General Alexander Haig learned from Haldeman’s notes that during those additional thirteen-and-a-quarter-minutes there was a discussion of how to deal with Watergate, thereby proving that I was involved in the cover-up only three days after the break-in, Haig attributed the erasure to “sinister forces.” He said this under oath in Judge John Sirica’s courtroom.

Now *that* is loyalty above and beyond the call of duty.

* * *

In retrospect, I realize that H.R. Haldeman was part of the plot against me all along, always trying to ingratiate himself—anything to impress me, when actually he w as trying to hurt my political career. Not that he was against me personally; I was just his particular assignment as part of an overall plan “to destroy,” in the words of Frank Sturgis, “the office of the presidency.”

Haldeman was a saboteur in the guise of a sycophant. In 1967, when he was a vice president at the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency, he sent me a long memo on how I could use the media in my ’68 campaign. I have since learned that during World War II, various corporations—Standard Oil, Wrigley Chewing Gum, Paramount Pictures—lent their services to the Office of Strategic Services, which later became the CIA. The Thompson Agency supplied Kenneth Hinks to be chief of the OSS planning staff. One of Haldeman’s predecessors, Richard de Rochemont, a vice president of J. Walter Thompson, was offered a position with the Secret Intelligence Branch of the OSS. Another Thompson official, Donald Coster, stayed on with the CIA in South Vietnam from 1959 to 1962.

That’s when Haldeman really latched on to me, in the ’62 campaign. And when we lost, it was Haldeman who persuaded me to make a public fool of myself with that godawful “You won’t have Nixon to kick around any more” press conference. It was Haldeman in 1972 who acted as a double agent and conspired with Dick Tuck to have all those Chinese fortune cookies contain the same message: “What about the

Howard Hughes loan?" And it was Haldeman who consciously sabotaged the research on the Hiss chapter in *Six Crises*.

On one occasion I was meeting with a group of blind veterans in the Oval Office. I wanted to display my empathy with them, so I began describing the Presidential Seal, which was woven into the carpet we happened to be standing on. A blind veteran got down on his knees and started feeling that design with his hands. I closed my eyes and proceeded to do the same. It was perhaps the most spontaneous gesture of my life, although I must admit I was grateful to hear the sound of cameras whirring. I was pleased that this scene of my true humanity was being recorded for posterity. But Haldeman ordered an embargo on that photograph, ostensibly to protect the dignity of my image, because the president should never be seen in a kneeling position.

Even a year after he resigned, there he was, old faithful Bob Haldeman, backstage with me at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville. He chided Johnny Cash for that time he refused to sing "Welfare Cadillac" at the White House, and Cash now replied, "Should I do it tonight and dedicate the song to you now that *you′re* on welfare?"

Haldeman did not appreciate the humor in that. He was too preoccupied with the betrayal of me that he had in mind. He handed me a yellow yo-yo and said, “This will really please the crowd. It’s an official Roy Acuff model.” I put the yo-yo in my pocket. Haldeman did not mention that the string had been loosened at the bottom, so when I was onstage and I flung that yo-yo down, it just *stayed* there. Once again, Haldeman had transformed the president into an asshole.

It was Haldeman who had urged me to Install the White House taping system. It was Haldeman who hired Alexander Butterfield, who testified to the whole world about the tapes, and told the FBI about E. Howard Hunt. Butterfield brought in Al Wong to set up the system and check it every day. And it was Wong who brought James McCord onto the team. It all seems so obvious now.

One thing about Gerald Ford, though: He keeps his promises—not only to pardon me, but also his promise to fire Alexander Butterfield, even though Ford was actually grateful to him. As for me, I should have listened to L. Patrick Gray when he warned me, “People on your staff are trying to mortally wound you.”

My wife, Pat, has sworn to me that she never told anyone about our marital difficulties, and of course I believe her, so the leak to Woodward and Bernstein could *only* have come from Haldeman. On top of all his other betrayals, he must have been Deep Throat too.

* * *

There was one plan of the White House Plumbers that never came to fruition. It involved the theft of Patricia Ellsberg’s dental records. This was my own idea—not Haldeman’s, not Hunt’s, not Liddy’s—*they* were satisfied with obtaining the records of Daniel Ellsberg’s psychiatrist.

But I remembered that the first time Alger Hiss confronted Whittaker Chambers, he requested to see his *teeth*. Hiss explained to me that he suspected Chambers might be someone he had known years before, and he wanted to see his teeth to make sure.

Well, that recollection inspired me. We were able to obtain the dental records of Ellsberg’s wife, all right, but did not have the opportunity to use them in helping to prove that she was guilty of espionage. I could not imagine exactly how we were going to achieve this but I did know that, *whatever*, it would be accepted by the public simply because the charge itself was so “off the wall.”

How odd that Whittaker Chambers, the dignified translator of *Bambi*, had been asked to publicly show his teeth as if he were some kind of stud at a horse show. I have never been able to forget that moment.

* * *

The paradox of our nation is that we turn our vices into virtues. As the truth about political assassinations—from Malcolm X to Mrs. Dorothy Hunt—finally begins to emerge, we may truthfully say, “Only in America does there exist the freedom to reveal how insidious we have been, and then to continue in our insidious way with an even more determined spirit.”

I still believe that the United States is the greatest country in the world. It is also the greatest show on earth.

I once had a vision of myself leaving Washington the way Jimmy Durante used to end his TV program, standing in a spotlight and bowing gracefully to the audience, then walking back a few steps into another spotlight, bowing again, and so on. Instead, I ended up sounding as helpless as Hal the Computer in the movie *2001*, unable to control my own memory banks.

My consolation for this personal tragedy is summed up in Jeane Dixon’s prediction: “Historians yet unborn are going to take the facts, and Richard Nixon will go down as a great President. They’re going to find that the price the world is paying for trying to discredit Nixon is going to be that we’ll practically lose our freedom.”

In the meantime, I am, at long last, completely at peace with myself. It has been worth all the struggle.

Postscript:

After "A Sneak Preview of Richard Nixon's Memoirs" was published, syndicated columnist Liz Smith—who hadn't seen that piece—wrote that H.R. Haldeman had been in the Oval Office with Nixon, and that his trousers were down to his ankles. Hoping to smoke out the truth, I retyped one page of the manuscript, inserting a phrase (shown in italics) in this sentence: "When the incident was over, I simply returned to my desk, and although the tension of vulnerability was still in the air *and my trousers were still around my ankles*, we resumed our discussion as if nothing had occurred." I then photocopied the manuscript and sent it to Liz Smith. I had assumed she would check with her source. Instead, she wrote in her column that she had been fooled by *me*, implying that her source had based that revelation on my article. Somehow my hoax on Liz Smith backfired. I had become a victim of my own satirical prophecy.

In his memoirs, I had Nixon insisting that Watergate was a setup to get rid of him as president. A decade later, Nixon himself made that claim in a network television interview. Furthermore, Haldeman in his book, *The Ends of Power*, would reveal that Nixon used code words when talking about the murder of President Kennedy. Haldeman said that Nixon always referred to the assassination as "the Bay of Pigs." And, on May 5, 1977, the *Houston Post* published a UPI dispatch that stated:

"Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis said Wednesday that the CIA planned the break-in because high officials felt Richard Nixon was becoming too powerful and was overly interested in the assassination of John Kennedy . . . 'Several times the President asked CIA director Richard Helms for the files on the Kennedy assassination, but Helms refused to give them to him, refused a direct order from the President,' Sturgis said. 'I believe Nixon would have uncovered the true facts in the assassination of President Kennedy and that would have taken off the heat in Watergate. Because Nixon wanted files, the CIA felt they had to get rid of him.' Asked if Nixon ever was in danger, Sturgis replied, 'Yes, absolutely. Nixon was lucky he wasn't killed—assassinated like President Kennedy.' "

One other thing. "A Sneak Preview of Richard Nixon's Memoir" was originally published in 1976, in which Nixon insisted that Watergate was a set-up to get rid of him as president. About a decade later, Tricky Dick made that exact same claim on a network television interview.

Satirical prophecy in action.

Why I Leaked the Anita Hill Affidavit

I shall identify myself only as a female aide to a Republican senator. It is also relevant that I have long nurtured a keen interest in psycho-history, the process by which a nation’ s direction is interpreted as an extension of the psychological makeup of those individuals who govern it.

Without going into specific detail, let me simply state that on October 5, 1991, I happened to hear part of a conversation among Judge—now Supreme Court Justice—Clarence Thomas, Senator Orrin Hatch and Senator Alan Simpson. The three were meeting informally one week after the Judiciary Committee voted, first 7-7, then 13-1, to recommend the confirmation of Judge Thomas, and one day after the full Senate indicated that he *would* be confirmed.

The conversation I happened to hear had to do with those charges brought by Anita Hill and ignored by the members of the committee, both Democratic and Republican. At that point in time I still thought this was an appropriate response, because the alternative would have been to hold an executive session, and Judge Thomas would then have had no practical choice but to resort to heavy denial. Now, however, these men were, in a jocular fashion, acknowledging the truth of what would turn out to be Professor Hill’s allegations.

Senator Simpson was saying, “Y’know, Clarence, I’ve seen some pretty raunchy porno movies in my time, but I never did see one where a lady was having sex with an *animal*.”

“I’ll never forget it,” Judge Thomas replied in his riveting sonorous tone. “They were in a barn. Except that the inside of the barn was like a theater.”

Senator Hatch interjected, “Summer stock, eh? No pun intended”

“There was a stage at one end,” Judge Thomas continued his description, “and the stage was facing rows and rows of wooden folding chairs. There were haystacks piled up on the stage, and in front of the haystacks there was a beautiful, buxom, blond woman—and a donkey. Well, the woman began disrobing and she started stroking the donkey to arousal.”

“Doesn’t sound at all sleazy to me,” Senator Simpson said.

“Actually, it had Beethoven piano sonatas playing in the background,” Judge Thomas said. “Well, when the woman was fully disrobed and the donkey was fully aroused, they began copulating, right there in front of those haystacks on the stage of that barn. Slow and sensual. Then bumping and grinding away, accompanied by passionate moans and wild braying. You’ve never seen a sight like this, I promise. And then the camera panned slowly toward the audience . . . and the audience consisted entirely of *donkeys*.”

The Senate office shook with raucous laughter, especially that of Judge Thomas. His booming guffaws rang like huge gongs in a church belfry. And, I must admit, I had to suppress my own laughter. I had been totally caught by surprise, but I appreciated getting the insight. Homo sapiens is, in reality, the only species that has a need for pornography.

When the group’s laughter finally began to simmer down, Senator Hatch said, “I suppose that movie was one of the demands of the animal rights people.”

“That’s correct,” Senator Simpson added. “Saving animals’ lives is no longer enough. They need *culture.*”

I felt like I was imprisoned in the boys’ locker room, but I was getting ready to force myself to leave anyway, and it would have ended right there for me if the subject matter hadn’t returned to Anita Hill.

“I’m glad nobody considered calling *her* to testify against me, even for a closed-door session,” Judge Thomas said. “But you fellas will really love this. Anita Hill was a very opinionated young lady. Actually, she and I once had an *extremely* animated discussion on the decriminalization of abortion. Can you imagine what the Democrats would’ve done with *that*?"

And that was the precise instant I made the decision to leak Professor Hill’s statement to the press. Although I have constantly been sexually *hassled*, I have never really been harassed in the *legal* sense of the word. However, I *have* had an abortion, and I was totally outraged by the blatant hypocrisy I’d overheard. I had never leaked a document before, but my anger overshadowed my fear.

I chose Nina Totenberg because I had come to trust her reporting about the Supreme Court on National Public Radio. I honestly had no idea what leaking the affidavit would accomplish. I certainly did not envision that it would literally embarrass the Senate into delaying the vote until public hearings were held, though that probably was my secret desire.

But Judge Thomas *testified under oath* that he had never discussed the subject of abortion. However, in response to a question by Senator Hank Brown, Professor Hill testified that she had disagreed with Judge Thomas in a discussion about *Roe v. Wade*. Unfortunately, then-Senator Joseph Biden quickly interrupted her.

“That is not the subject of these hearings,” he said.

Personally, I feel quite disappointed about that particular aspect of the testimony, but I have not the slightest regret over leaking Anita Hill’s affidavit, and I would gladly do it all over again.

I certainly set a higher moral standard for myself than did the staffer for Senator John Danforth who wrote Judge Thomas’s statement that began, “Nobody helped me with this.”

President Clinton’s Private Confession

The following is a leaked transcript of a closed-door, secretly taped prayer breakfast that Bill Clinton hosted for a group of religious leaders after the impeachment trial failed to remove him from office.

#

Gentlemen--and lady (I guess you must be the Episcopalian)—thank you for being here. It’s too bad Reverend Moon isn’t among us this morning, so he could perform a mass impeachment of all the senators who swore under oath that they would be impartial. But seriously, folks, I’d like begin with an epiphany I had yesterday, one that truly humbled me. Strangely enough, it happened while I was watching *The Roseanne Show*. I had never seen it before, but she was interviewing Paula Jones and, as my mother used to say, curiosity got the best of me.

Ms. Jones was telling Roseanne about the first time she saw me in that hotel. She was working at the courtesy booth for the governors’ conference. She described me as funny-looking, the way my hair was styled, being overweight, how my suit was out of fashion and didn’t fit. So, she was sitting at the registration desk with her girlfriend, pointing at me and giggling. Somehow, I perceived her through the filter of arrogance that people with power develop, and *I* assumed that she was giving me a come-hither look. That simple misperception is what triggered this whole long ordeal. I took her willingness for granted.

It was different with Monica Lewinsky. I mean to say, she flashed the strap of her thong underwear—it made my heart go *thump*—and, you know, I'm a prisoner at the White House. I can't go to a motel, but Monica appeared like a gift from Heaven, and I succumbed to temptation. I was fully cognizant that this was a very delicate situation—I even asked for *permission* to kiss her—yet I blocked out my foresight. Way back in college, when I tried to avoid military service, I was already thinking ahead to campaigning for president, but now I found myself ignoring the likelihood that Monica would not keep our relationship a secret.

I certainly didn't consider the possibility that she would become so seriously involved with me. It was embarrassing to hear the tape that Linda Tripp made, where Monica told her what she had said to me on the phone: "I love you, Butthead." I remember thinking when it happened, "Hey, I'm the president of the United States, you can't call me Butthead." However, I immediately decided to treat the situation with humor. But she hung up before I could say, "I love you, Beavis."

Surprisingly, I was *not* embarrassed about the infamous cigar incident. I felt that it had been an act of restraint from *actual* intercourse. Kind of tender and playful. Now, if it had been a Cuban cigar, *that* would have been illegal. But this was not the sort of intimacy that I would have felt comfortable performing with the First Lady. Hillary and I are really close, but as I’m sure you understand, no cigar.

For her, the most revealing thing in *The Starr Report* is Monica’s fantasy about our—Monica and me—being together more often when I’ll be out of office; where she quotes me as saying, “I might be alone in three years.” Hillary was furious, not only because it had provided a young intern with false encouragement, but also because it implied that we--Hillary and me--don’t have sex, and she felt it divulged our agreement that if we were to separate, it would not occur before we left the White House.

For me, the most revealing section—in that same section of the report—is Monica’s testimony that I jokingly said, “Well, what are we going to do when I’m seventy-five and I have to pee twenty-five times a day?” True, I did say that, but I really *wasn’t* joking. In fact, it was my fear of old age that kept drawing me to Monica. She was my direct link to youth. So I was being *literal* about peeing twenty-five times a day when

I’ m seventy-five. Hell, I drink at least eight glasses of water a day *now*—just like I’ m supposed to, for my health—but then I have to *pee* at least eight times a day. Ironically, the TV commercials warn that if you have to pee eight times in 24 hours, it’ s a symptom of an overactive bladder.

Indeed, irony has permeated this long-running scandal, beginning to end. It was ironic that my sexual appetite helped put me in office—the Gennifer Flowers allegation originally placed me in the media spotlight—and it was my sexual appetite that almost tossed me out of that same office. And it’ s ironic that, although Kathleen Willey *enjoyed* our brief encounter, to prove it we would have had to resort to obtaining testimony from her confidant, the wonderful Linda Tripp.

Now, there are things that I’ ve done as president of which I’ m *truly* ashamed. Even before my inauguration, I made it a point to stop in Arkansas to oversee the execution of a mentally retarded prisoner. At his last meal, he said he’ d wait to have his dessert, a slice of pecan pie, until after the execution—that’ s how much he understood what was going on. I’ m ashamed of *under*-protecting the rights of gays and *over*-protecting children from the Internet. I’ m ashamed of being *against* medical marijuana and *for* requiring a urine test as a prerequisite to obtaining a driver’ s license. I’ m ashamed of bombing Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan.

I’m ashamed of *in*creasing the military budget and *de*creasing the welfare budget. I’m ashamed of dropping cluster bombs and continuing to plant land mines.

But the Republicans didn’t dare attack me for any of those positions because they are *their* positions too.

I’ll tell you how I survived this past year, how I maintained such high approval ratings, while Newt Gingrich fell by the wayside. How I managed, in short, to remain president. It was partly the state of the economy, and it was partly the state of the culture. Pornography is a twenty-billion-dollars-a-year business in this country. Steven Spielberg told me that’s more than Hollywood’s entire domestic box-office receipts. Because it’s what the American public *wants*. And the TV networks exploit that dirty little secret. It’s why sweeps weeks are always so raunchy. So, then, what *I* did wasn’t considered such a big deal after all.

Mainly, though, I have survived because, one sunny afternoon, Monica was positioning herself on the carpet under my desk in the Oval Office *while* I was on the phone with Benjamin Netanyahu. I was telling him about the time that Monica was performing oral sex on me while Yassir Arafat was waiting in the Rose Garden for our appointment. I *didn't* tell Netanyahu that she was just about to perform the same act on me while I was on the phone with *him*. Anyway, at that point, Monica found a big old dusty Mason jar under my desk. There was a label on the side which read, "Property of Ronald Reagan."

That Mason jar was filled with Teflon, and I have rubbed it on myself every day since.

I began my talk this morning with an epiphany, and I'd like to end with another. This epiphany also occurred while I was watching television—*Larry King Live*—and, once again, Paula Jones was the guest. At one point she said, "I've never voted in my life." And I was astounded. Then she said, "I'm so apolitical, it's unreal." And I realized what an incredibly great country America really is, that somebody who was just a plain citizen, who was never even *interested* in politics—somebody who had never even *voted* for a president—had nearly succeeded in toppling one.

Well, this has been a catharsis for me. I just want to say once more how much I appreciate your presence here. And finally I would like to share with you a little witticism that Hillary came up with last night, an idea for what my epitaph should be: "Here lies Bill Clinton, but that depends on what you mean by lies." Isn't she wonderful?

Oh, and one more thing. Now listen carefully. I did *not* have sexual assault with that woman, Ms. Broaddrick. I’ ll be honest with you, it may have been *rough* sex, but it was totally consensual. That, I can guarantee. Thank you and God bless you all.

The Autobiography of Monica Lewinsky

The following is an exclusive excerpt from an autobiography-in-progressy by Monica Lewinsky, titled Going Down in History. *The manuscript was leaked to* The Realist *by, of course, a reliable source.*

#

I am not an airhead. I'm a victim, partly of my own making. And mostly, I'm a political pawn of the spin doctors. There are several books being written about the White House scandal, but only a few individuals know what really happened, and only I know who *I* really am, which is why I have decided to write this book. I would write it even if I didn't need the money for legal expenses. My life may be ruined—at least my reputation will be forever tainted—but the truth must be told.

I don't like being a one-dimensional symbol. If anybody were to take a free-association test, the psychiatrist would say "Monica Lewinsky" and the patient would immediately respond "Oral sex." Maybe soon my name will be in a crossword puzzle—the clue: eight letters across—and the correct word will be "fellatio."

Back home in Brentwood, I've been listening to talk radio a lot. Ronn Owens on KABC had listeners phone in with nothing but jokes about me for a solid hour. First he warned the audience that if they were easily offended, they should tune out. I have never felt so objectified in my life, and yet, at the same time, I found the program quite riveting.

The best call came from a nine-year-old who said, "Bill Clinton violated the Eleventh Commandment: Thou shalt not put thy rod in thy staff." The worst call came from a man who asked, "What do the Titanic and Monica Lewinsky have in common?" The answer was, "They both have dead seamen (semen) floating in the hull."

And remember that awful piece of gossip—the one Lucianne Goldberg initiated in order to get attention from the press for *her*—that I kept a blue dress stained with Clinton's dried ejaculation as a souvenir? Well, Jonathan Brandmeier on KLSX invited listeners to call in and suggest euphemisms for presidential semen. My favorite was "Bubba butter." Apparently, my role is to serve as a vehicle for the destruction of taboos.

I have also become an automatic comedy reference. So, to Jay Leno, David Letterman and Conan O'Brien, I'm very useful in punchlines. To *Saturday Night Live*, I'm just a character in their sketches, and never without that beret from my famous hugging-Bill TV footage. But I did think it was hilarious to cast John Goodman in drag as Linda Tripp. That cheered me up. I' ve been simultaneously depressed, scared and, strangely enough, exhilarated.

As an instant celebrity, I' ve learned that everybody always sees everybody else through their own particular filters. Democrats, Republicans, men, women, the other interns—all perceive me subjectively. For a manufacturer of novelty items, I was simply a disembodied inspiration for the marketing of "Presidential Kneepads." And for *Penthouse* magazine, I would only be considered their next notorious masturbation enhancer.

In the eyes of the media—from NBC News to *Nightline*, from *TIME* magazine to *People*, from the *New York Times* to the *National Enquirer*, from the *Washington Post* to *Entertainment Tonight*—I am purely a commodity. Naturally, I believe in the First Amendment, so I' m against censorship. All I' m saying is that while America is achieving adolescence publicly, the tabloids have won the war.

The battleground is like an ongoing contemporary Shakespearean tragicomedy, but there is no script, there is no producer, there is no director. There is only the process of everyone' s karma interacting. I recall the words of Terence McKenna when he was a guest lecturer at Lewis & Clark. He said, “Chaos is the tail that wags the dog.”

Damage control is the name of the game. It was Dick Morris who advised Clinton to get a dog. Buddy, huh? They should’ve named him Photo-Op. It was also Dick Morris who suggested taping that ostensibly candid scene of the First Couple dancing on the beach. And I would bet my entire book advance that both Hillary and Bill *knew ahead of time* that Dick Morris was going to release a trial balloon that *if* the rumor about Hillary being a lesbian were true, *then* it would be perfectly reasonable that her husband would need to seek sexual gratification elsewhere.

In fact, the reason I think that Clinton’s approval ratings have been so high is because people can *identify* with him fooling around. I mean, when Jimmy Carter admitted that he had lust in his heart, it was the adultery vote that helped get him elected. And that was only lust in his *heart.* Bill Clinton is an *activist.*

I’ve been reading a book, *Spin Cycle* by Howard Kurtz, and there’s a story in there about that time in 1996 when the president said that he “might like to date” a shapely, 500-year-old mummy whose remains were on display at the National Geographic Society. Later, chatting after a few cocktails, Press Secretary Mike McCurry told a dozen journalists on the press plane that he could understand Clinton’s remark. “Compared to that mummy he’s been fucking,” McCurry chuckled, “why not?” Poor Hillary.

Without bothering to mention that it was off the record, McCurry assumed his joke wouldn’t be reported, and it wasn’t until that book. Washington is a very cynical place. Everything is stated carefully and deliberately, with the *intention* that it will be repeated. When McCurry told the *Chicago Tribune* in an interview that Clinton’s relationship with *me* could turn out to have been “complicated,” it was no slip of the tongue. He was fully aware that his observation would appear in print.

Unlike Richard Nixon, who never dreamed that *his* words would be published in a book, *Abuse of Power: The New Nixon Oval Office Tapes,* edited by Stanley Kutner: “Bob [Haldeman], please get me the names of the Jews, you know, the big Jewish contributors to the Democrats. Could we please investigate some of the cocksuckers?”

My mom is a member of the Book of the Month Club, and in their brochure they printed it “c*cks*ck*rs.” Anyhoo, that’s how everybody thinks of *me* now. I’m the nation’s official c*cks*ck*r laureate.

The image of me on my knees giving head to the president has become a cultural icon. The irony is that *it never happened.* When Wolf

Blitzer from CNN asked Clinton at a press conference what he would like to say to me, Clinton smiled and said, “That’s good, that’s good”—referring sarcastically to the *question*—but it was extremely ironic, because that’s *exactly* what I *imagined* he *did* say to me: “That’s good, that’s good.” And I replied, “I gave you a blow job, but I didn’t swallow.” He started laughing hysterically, just like that time he did with Boris Yeltsin. Bill liked my sense of humor. That’s why we went from flirtation to friendship.

However, the reasons I visited the White House thirty-seven times was not for Bill—it was to be with Hillary—*she* was the one who desired me physically. The rumor about her being a lesbian was *true.* And so my relationship with Bill *was* complicated. He just acted as a middle man for Hillary, and now, by denying an affair with *me*, he’s telling the truth *and* taking the fall for *her*. In that sense, he’s an incredibly loyal husband. Despite what the public may think, Bill is absolutely devoted to Hillary.

Everybody is watching so closely for him to commit the next indiscretion, but it would have to be with somebody he can *totally* trust, somebody who could suck the leader of the Western World’s dick and *not* confide in a friend, or to somebody who *pretended* to be a friend. So, for a while, Bill is left with only Buddy’s tongue for sexual companionship.

At least, Buddy won’t lick and tell. And if I know my president, while Buddy is pleasuring him, Clinton will fantasize that it’s a *female* dog.

Sarah Palin’ s Reality Sitcom

Referring to the Ronald Reagan presidency, Neal Gabler has written about “the triumph of entertainment over political ideology of any sort.” And Kurt Andersen labeled Bill Clinton the “Entertainer-in-Chief.” The voters are the audience, conditioned to fear and superficiality in commercials for erectile dysfunction and political campaigns alike, both having scary side effects. And now the injection of Sarah Palin and her family into the McCain vs. Obama campaign makes one wonder whether the winner of this race will ultimately depend on which candidate presents the better sitcom. It already *is* a reality show. Do you know what the difference is between a sitcom and a reality show? The laugh track. Otherwise, how would the masses be able to tell whether something is funny or not? Hmmmmm . . . In any case, we’ re pleased to present the pilot episode of:

BRIDGES TO NOWHERE

[Instrumental rockabilly music accompanies a montage of Sarah Palin in various contexts, as the opening credits are superimposed on these images: In a helicopter, using a machine-gun to shoot a wolf running away in the snow. As a contestant in the Miss Alaska competition. A

wedding photo. Burning a pile of books. Jumping high to block a shot in a basketball game. Seated at her desk in the governor' s office. At a barbecue with her children. Giving a speech to a large crowd. At the bank, exchanging a wolf' s left foreleg for a $150 bounty. Tossing her hat way up in the air and then shooting it down with a rifle.]

[Sarah and Todd are slumped down on the living-room sofa.]

SARAH: I' m exhausted and exhilarated at the same time. I was at the Learning Annex all day, taking that course in "How to Be a Vice President."

TODD: And I was interviewing potential nannies all day. No one fits the bill yet. But I just keep calling the agency. Maybe I' ll try Craigslist.

[The telephone rings. Todd picks it up.]

TODD: Hello . . . thanks, I will. *[Hangs up the phone and clicks on the TV.]* That was McCain. *[Looks at* TV Guide *for the channel number and clicks the TV on.]* Keith Olbermann is doing a Special Comment about you on MSNBC.

OLBERMANN: When John McCain first selected Sarah Palin as his running mate, it seemed to me that it was the best "What were you *thinking*?" moment since Hugh Grant got caught getting oral sex from a prostitute in his rental car. I was sure that with Governor Palin as the ambush candidate, Senator McCain would be ridiculed into a severe case of buyer’ s remorse, his impulsive choice would backfire, and there would then be an epidemic of *schaedenfreude* among Democats. But I must admit, Ms. Palin, you have, dare I say, a certain Machiavellian charisma, and I was not quite prepared for that. You said that you deliberately tried to make yourself look frumpy, what with those Kawasaki eyeglasses and that chocolate-rust cotton-candy hair-do, sort of like the secretary in a porn movie who takes off her glasses and shakes her hair loose, then she goes ahead and seduces her uptight boss right there on his own black leather executive chair. Or so the comedians tell me, I wouldn’ t know. But you might as well *be* the star of a porn movie, because your main qualification to be vice president is that you *have* a vagina and you *are* a cunt. Allow me to parse that for you, Sarah. When I say that you were appointed because you have a vagina, there is no way in semantic purgatory that McCain would have chosen a *man* who had exactly the same political positions and experience as you--except that your American flag pin is bigger--so his having a penis would simply not make one iota of difference. And, you’ re a cunt if for no other reason than, in your acceptance speech, using Barack Obama as a prototype, you demeaned countless dedicated and courageous community organizers across the nation by pretending that, as mayor, you exercised *actual* responsibilities which ostensibly *they* don’ t have. And I am not being sexist here, Sarah, because I am also calling John McCain a prick, if only because he is against funding higher education for our young men and women who are fighting and being maimed and dying in Iraq and Afghanistan--McCain’ s pathetic rationale being that if they had that funding to look forward to, then they just might prefer to come home and go to college rather than re-enlist. So, you-the-cunt and he-the-prick have a very complementary relationship. Support our troops, indeed! McCain’ s idea of supporting the troops is to send them more antidepressants--one out of every eight is already *on* them--so they can go kick down doors and kill people but still feel good about it. Oh, yes, and Sarah, we must not forget how Cindy McCain described the basis of your foreign policy experience. She said, “Alaska is the closest part of our country to Russia.” With allies like that, you don’ t need opponents. Cindy reminds me of Jessica Simpson, when she asked if a can of “Chicken of the Sea” was fish or chicken. What’ s next, Cindy will sing her own rendition of Rosemary Clooney’ s classic song, “C’ monna My *Houses*” ? And speaking of *rendition*, Sarah, I wonder what you think of the CIA flying prisoners to other continents where they are tortured. Hey, what ever happened to *Country First*?--they should be tortured in *this* country--yes, this country that is so incredibly endangered by the Unholy Trinity of corrupt government, welfare corporations and evangelical religion. Incidentally, Sarah, wouldn’t you agree that Rush Limbaugh--infamous hater of the “feminazis”--was a sexist when he boasted, “We’re the ones with a babe on the ticket!” Inquiring minds want to know. Likewise, wouldn’t you agree that McCain was a sexist when he was asked a question about Hillary Clinton during the primaries--“How do we beat the bitch?”--and he replied, “Excellent question.” And wasn’t it sexist of him to vote against equal pay for women? Just remember, Sarah, the only thing that John McCain wants more than to live in the White House is to have a *menage a’ trois* with you and Cindy. Good night and good luck.

[Todd clicks the TV off.]

SARAH: I’ll tell you something, Todd. I feel like a human dartboard for the media, but I’m developing a thick skin.

TODD: I know what you mean. I say, “Oh, yeah, media? *[Clutching his crotch]* Troopergate *this*!”

SARAH: And you know what, the campaign spinners who feed the media are just as bad. They’re like the airport security people, who have to spend all day looking at a screen in order to focus on potential threats in the shape of a gun or a knife or a hand grenade. Both campaigns--*they* have to focus on each other’ s opponents in desperate search of *anything* that can be deliberately misinterpreted to distract all the dumbed-down voters from the *real* issues like national security. At first, I thought that was the name of a bank. “Hurry up and invest your money at the National Security Bank--before they fail!” *[Sarah and Todd start laughing hysterically.]* And what about earmarks? Why, they’ re just political hickies....

* * *

[Piper is sitting on a rocking chair in her bedroom, with Trig on her lap, holding a bottle to his mouth with one hand, and continually licking her other hand in order to leave a saliva deposit, then smoothing down Trig’ s hair.]

PIPER: Come on now, Trig, I want you to drink your moose’ n’ banana shake. It tastes so delicious. And it’ s good for you too, even if the plastic bottle has poison lead in it because it’ s from China or somewhere. Listen, I’ m sorry that you were like a circus prop at the convention. People screaming all over the place. But it’ s lucky they gave you a watchamacallit, a sedative so you could sleep through all that noise. And you didn’ t even know that you were being passed around like a marijuana joint, huh? It’s legal here in Alaska. Did you know that? But it has to be only one ounce or less. And then you have to smoke it in your own house. I’m gonna wait till I’m thirteen before I try it. Bristol and Levi smoke it when Mommy’s out making a speech. If she was here, she’d smell it right away, so then they have to go somewhere else. Mommy says, “Pot may be part of God’s plan, but not in *this* house.” She’s always saying that something is part of God’s plan, but I don’t understand what she means about that. Are hurricanes and train crashes part of God’s plan too? Anyhow, you’re not supposed to smoke anything when you’re pregnant, right? Hey, Trig, you wanna hear what I think would be a nice name for Bristol’s baby? Diversion. I didn’t think of that by myself. I heard my teacher tell another teacher that Mommy’s baby is a diversion. I think it could be for either a boy or a girl. Hey, my tongue is dry. I don’t have any watchamacallit, any salvia left. Maybe if I just have a little sip of your moose’n’banana shake. *[Drinks from bottle]* It’s really yummy...

* * *

[Track is riding a stationery bike in his room while talking with Willow.]

TRACK: I’m telling you, those Iraq Veterans Against the War were real traitors at the Democratic convention. I learned that they had the nerve to be in full uniform, and they were chanting, “My buddy’s in the foxhole with a bullet in his head--I called to get the medic but he’s already dead.” But at *our* convention, just like the war in Iraq was a justifiable pre-emptive strike, so was the raid on the protesters before the convention began.

WILLOW: What happened? I was busy taking care of Trig.

TRACK: The police and the sheriff’s department seized material that could’ve been used to barricade roads, and spikes that could disable the delegates’ buses. They confiscated slingshots and buckets of gray water and urine. It’s better to prevent using that stuff *before* it happens. They busted four people on suspicion of conspiracy to commit a riot, and detained dozens of others. They took boxes of pamphlets on free-speech laws in Minnesota, and booklets on how to protest legally.

WILLOW: That doesn’t seem right. I was listening to the radio, and a pundint was talking --

TRACK: You mean pundit--

WILLOW: --a pundit, he was talking about keeping protesters out of sight, they could only speak on P.A. systems in fenced-off, like cages, on side streets, and I thought they were talking about the Olympics in China, but then I realized that they were actually talking about the protesters at *our* conventions.

TRACK: It’s not the same. China is a Commie dictatorship--and here there were seventy-seven applications to speak--but not one single protester was given permission, and all those who applied were arrested before the games began. Way to go.

WILLOW: I heard that in St. Paul, even a *mime* got a permit to speak. And the people who *did* speak couldn’t be heard. I mean, what about the First Amendment? We learned about that in school.

TRACK: Yeah, well, it doesn’t apply to those anarchists on the opening day, with black cloth covering their faces, a few hundred of them, running around the streets, setting fires, throwing rocks, breaking windows, blocking traffic. It was the duty of the riot squad and the National Guard to stop those actions. Tear gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets, concussion grenades, whatever it took.

WILLOW: But what about the *peaceful* demonstrators?

TRACK: There were ten thousand demonstrators who were peaceful, and they *were* allowed to march against the war. All they had to do was follow the rules. When their permit expired at 5 p.m., they still tried to march to the convention center, but the authorities had already blocked a couple of the bridges that led to the convention center. They blocked ’em with snowplows and gravel trucks, police barricades and plenty of manpower. I saw the protesters running toward one of those bridges, and they were being chased by police in riot gear and teargas masks, so then the protesters were stuck in the middle. Isn’t that great?

WILLOW: Ha-ha, the bridges to nowhere. *[Track and Willow giggle wildly.]* Y’know, I’m really gonna miss you when you go to Iraq.

TRACK: I’m gonna miss you too. Anyway, the thing is, our guys had to be prepared, starting months before the convention, because there’s all kinds of front organizations out there that the FBI had to get infiltrated, like the environmentalists and vegetarians who pretend to be just innocent special-interest groups. Same with farmers, attorneys, medics, reporters--a journalist, Amy Goodman and her producers, plus a guy from Associated Press on the sidewalk in front of a building where there was a huge party given by lobbyists for legislators with a band, Hookers and Blow, not to be confused with a terrorist band, Rage Against the Machine, and also a bunch of bloggers and a whole video collective called I-Witness--some people had to be roughed-up and handcuffed and arrested for trying to interfere with law enforcement. Their computers and laptops and cameras and journals and diaries were seized. In some locations, even children had assault rifles pointed at their faces. In the military, this is all known as "anticipatory self-defense."

WILLOW: That's wicked. So tell me, are you nervous about going to Iraq?

TRACK: *[Stops pedaling and pulls up the left leg of his sweatpants, revealing a tattoo of Christ on his calf.]* Not as long as He's with me, and He will be, every moment, day and night.

WILLOW: *[Bends down and kisses the tattoo]* I really love Jesus. Whenever I close my eyes and pray, I don't know what God looks like, but I always think of Jesus, because I know what *He* looks like....

* * *

[Bristol and Levi are sitting on the living-room sofa, holding hands. He is wearing a T-shirt that says "Billabong."]

BRISTOL: Here it is Friday night, and we can't even go out anywhere, because everybody points at us and stares at us and talks about us. It makes me feel like a real freak.

LEVI: How do you think *I* feel? All I ever wanted to do is play hockey and hang out with the guys and party like mad and get stoned out of my gourd and just chill out. I don't give a shit about *politics*. If we didn't get drunk and screw in the tent outside that party, I never woulda had to go to that fuckin’ Republican convention with your parents, who hate my ass off but they pretend we’re one big happy family.

BRISTOL: Oh, c’mon, if my mother gets elected--like I wasn’t planning to live in Washington, D.C.-- but it’ll be fun. Please, don’t be such a grouch.

LEVI: You saw my MySpace page. I mean *everybody’s* seen it. “I’m a fuckin’ redneck who likes to snowboard and ride dirt bikes.” I’m too young to get married. I’m trapped. I was just minding my own business, and suddenly my whole fuckin’ *life* is destroyed.

BRISTOL: Look, I don’t wanna argue with you any more. Let’s just see what’s on TV.

[Levi reaches for the remote control and clicks on the TV.]

DAVID LETTERMAN: Here’s good news, ladies and gentlemen. The Palin family crisis has been solved now, and today the baby is being adopted by Angelina Jolie.

LEVI: Boy, I sure wish *that* was true. I never wanted to have kids.

BRISTOL: Please, this is not exactly a picnic for me. Let’s just see what else is on.

[Click!]

JAY LENO: Governor Palin announced that her seventeen-year-old unmarried daughter is five months pregnant. And you thought John Edwards was in trouble *before*. Now he’s *really* done it.

[Click!]

CONAN O’BRIEN: Sarah Palin said, “We should never have introduced her to John Edwards.”

[Click!]

CRAIG FERGUSON: I don’t think that a young lady getting pregnant should even be news. Unless John Edwards is the father. Then that *is* kinda news.

[Click!]

BILL MAHER: Palin has five children including an infant that has Downs syndrome. She had it when she was forty-three years old. And it looks a lot like John Edwards.

[Levi reaches for the remote control and clicks off the TV.]

LEVI: That’s really great, Bristol. John Edwards fucked you *and* your mother . . .

* * *

[Sarah is sitting at her computer when there is a knock on her office door.]

SARAH: Come in. *[Willow opens the door, walks in and sits down.]* I’m just looking over my stump speech here. It keeps changing.

WILLOW: Mom, I have to talk to you.

SARAH: Yes, dear, what’s on your mind?

WILLOW: *[Pausing]* I’m . . . pregnant.

SARAH: Very funny.

WILLOW: Mom, I’m not kidding.

SARAH: Willow, you’re only fourteen years old! How could you be pregnant? Are you sure?

WILLOW: I did the test three different times. They all said “Positive.” I can feel changes in my body.

SARAH: This is horrible. I mean wonderful, of course. God always has a plan. Who’s the father?

WILLOW: *[Pausing]* It’s . . . Track.

SARAH: What! How can that be? He’s your brother! You had sex with your brother?!

WILLOW: I still don’t understand *how* I got pregnant. He borrowed a condom from Dad’s sock drawer.

SARAH: I’m shocked beyond belief. When did this happen?

WILLOW: Let’s see, the first time was--

SARAH: The *first* time! Did he force himself on you?

WILLOW: Well, not really. It was voluntary.

SARAH: Oh my God! What are we gonna do? Oh my God! I’m hysterical! Oh my God!

* * *

[Todd is finishing up an interview with a beautiful young woman in his office. He tries unsuccessfully to avert his eyes from her cleavage.]

TODD: Well, your resume’ is solid--I’m totally impressed with your experience as a nanny--you have excellent references, you have a very enthusiastic personality, and I must admit, of all the women I’ve been interviewing, you’re not only the most qualified, you’re also the most attractive, if you don’t mind my saying so.

NANNY: Oh, I don’t mind at all, Mr. Palin. As a matter of fact, the feeling is mutual.

TODD: Please, call me Todd.

NANNY: Todd. Such a nice masculine name. *[Standing]* When would you like me to start?

TODD: I’ll have to figure that out with Sarah when she returns. *[Standing]* She’s meeting with Senator McCain today.

NANNY: *[Slowly moving toward him]* Then just be sure to call me whenever you know.

TODD: *[Slowly moving toward her]* All right, I will.

NANNY: You have my number.

TODD: And you have my number.

NANNY: I certainly do.

TODD: *[They are standing just a few inches from each other.]* The kids are really gonna *love* you. *[Gradually they embrace, He moves to kiss her on the cheek. She turns her head so that their lips touch, leading to a passionate kiss.]*

NANNY: *[Mumbling between kisses]* I feel like Jude Law's babysitter.

TODD: *[Mumbling between kisses]* Who's Jude Law?

NANNY: *[Unbuttoning his shirt]* He's a British actor who made love with his girlfriend Sienna Miller's babysitter on the billiards table.

TODD: *[Unbuttoning her blouse]* I don't have a billiards table, but I do have a cue-stick.

NANNY: *[Unbuckling his belt]* Oh, I know you do, I can feel it . . .

* * *

[Sarah is pacing back and forth at her meeting with John McCain.]

McCAIN: Calm down, Sarah, have a seat, take it easy.

SARAH: *[Sitting down]* I’m still in a state of shock. My heart is beating so fast. I have terminal dry mouth. This is awful.

McCAIN: Let’s review the situation. Your seventeen-year-old daughter is pregnant. And your nineteen-year-old son is the father. It was consensual sex. Nevertheless, that’s *statutory* rape. I think we have only two options. One, she gets an abortion.

SARAH: I’m sorry, that’s off the table. I mean it’s out of the question.

McCAIN: Look, I realize that you’re against abortion based on your religious principles, even in the case of rape or incest. And in this case it’s both. But you’re not against abortion if the life of the mother is endangered. That could be our exit strategy. There’s a blind doctor in Washington who performs the safest possible abortion, and he wouldn’t even know who the patient is.

SARAH: Absolutely not. Here’s what I thought about on the plane. Of course, we will never identify Track as the father--I’m so angry I found myself hoping that he would get killed in Iraq, and that would be perceived as such a heartbreaking patriotic sacrifice--I wanted to offer a bounty for the delivery of Track's severed left calf with the Jesus tattoo, and yet I don’t want him to be indicted and sent to prison for who knows how many years. What we *can* do is to place the full blame on a stranger who was wearing a stocking over his face so that there will be no description except for that detail. Willow didn’t report it because she didn’t have enough cash to pay for a rape kit, and she felt afraid to tell me until she was sure that she was pregnant. But she *will* be giving birth to that baby. And when Track returns home from Iraq, he will help raise that child, pretending he’s only the uncle, which he actually *will* be. We could even announce Willow’s pregnancy as an October surprise. That would endear our Christian conservative base to us even more than now, and it could provide a surge--excuse the expression--to our popularity.

McCAIN: Just because it worked in Bristol’s case, that doesn’t mean it will also work in Willow’s case. I hadn’t quite considered an announcement like this as a possible October surprise. I thought we might capture Osama bin Laden. Or that there could be impeachment and conviction of Bush and Cheney, but it would leave Nancy Pelosi as the new president, and we surely don’t want *that*. Maybe Obama would be assassinated, then there would be rioting all over the country, there would be martial law, the election would be canceled, and the Bush administration would remain in power. Or the October surprise could be dropping bombs on Pakistan. Or an air strike on Iran. Even if Israel did that, it would be with U.S. aid and approval. Also, there’s a scenario floating around that Joe Biden will drop out of the race in deference to Hillary as Obama’s vice-presidential running mate replacing Biden. That would really ruin our chances of winning.

PALIN: So tell me what the second option is.

McCAIN: That *you* drop out of the race. It’s the honorable thing to do.

PALIN: What are you gonna do, kick me off the island? Let’s face it, John, if I dropped out, you’d lose the election for sure, and you know it. You need to show me off during this campaign. I’m your biggest asset. I wanted to go on my own Palin Talk Express tour, but no, your neocon friends--*they* discovered me a year before you and I met--and now they’re so afraid I can’t function without their guidance. They’re like a mad beehive, spouting campaign buzz words at me. But I will *never* drop out of this race. I would sooner give to the media my tape of our one-night stand in my hotel room at the governors’ conference last February.

McCAIN: If you were to do that, I would release *my* tape of *this* whole conversation. So we’re just canceling each other out with such tactics. But that’s what I like about you. You’re such a feisty lady.

Y’ know, Sarah, if we get elected, I was hoping that our little tryst in Washington could happen again, perhaps this time in the Oval Office.

PALIN: Thanks but no thanks.

McCAIN: I remember you were *so* pregnant then.

PALIN: And I remember exactly what you said. “Let me baptize your fetus with some maverick juice.” How romantic. But you were lucky I was *already* pregnant, because it would not have happened otherwise, since, as you know, I’ m against birth control. Raising children is performing a task that is from God. And I believe that life begins *before* conception.

McCAIN: You and the Bush administration. They also consider birth control to be a form of abortion. The Health and Human Services Department is secretly trying to redefine contraception--the Pill, IUDs, you name it—redefine as abortion. So this federal agency could eliminate many state laws. Pharmacists could refuse to supply women with birth control devices. Insurance companies wouldn’ t cover contraception. Rape victims wouldn’ t have access to the morning-after pill. You have your beliefs and I respect them, but I’ m trying to distance myself from George Bush.

PALIN: Except for his speechwriters.

McCAIN: Oh, you’re referring to Matthew Scully and your acceptance speech at the convention. He’s great. By the way, he asked me to pass on a line to you for the stump speech when you’re talking about Obama: “Charlie Manson was a community organizer!”

PALIN: That will definitely get a good response. We need as many applause lines as we can muster up. Maybe *every* sentence should get a reaction. Clapping, laughter, cheers. The audiences always get off on that. They feel high and they associate it with us.

McCAIN: Fine, at least we’re back on the same page again. Now promise that if you do become vice president you won’t arrange for me to be killed by the grace of your powerful buddies in Alaska so that you can then become president.

PALIN: Okay, I promise not to have you killed--unless you decide to run for a second term. *[They both chortle nervously.]*

* * *

[The TV set is on, but nobody is watching. A commercial is playing.]

VOICEOVER BY ALEC BALDWIN: *[Images of Sarah Palin waving to huge, screaming crowds, signing autographs and being surrounded by paparazzi.]* She’s the biggest celebrity in the world. *[Video footage of Michael Jackson and Michael Richards are superimposed as if they are in* *the company of Sarah.]* But is she ready to lead? John McCain knows full well she isn’t. With the energy shortage looming, McCain says no to windmills and solar power. And with the economic crisis already upon us, McCain says he’ll cut taxes by lowering payments for Social Security and Medicare. More suffering, increased drilling. That’s the real McCain.

[The face of Joe Biden fills the screen.}

VOICEOVER BY JOE BIDEN: I’m Joe Biden and I approve this message. Let me just add that when one of John McCain’s top economic advisers, former Senator Phil Gramm, was quoted that the United States was only in a “mental recession” and had become “a nation of whiners,” he unintentionally revealed the massive disconnect between the citizens of this country and their representatives . . .

[A few minutes later, Biden is still talking, when Nanny walks into the room, cellphone to her ear, and shuts off the TV.]

NANNY: Yes, hello. Is this the *National Enquirer*? . . . Oh, good. I’d like to speak to a reporter, please . . . Thank you, I’ll hold . . .

[A split screen shows Nanny and the Reporter on split screens.]

REPORTER: Hello, what can I do for you?

NANNY: Yes, hello, I have a story that you might be interested in. I’ve been having an affair with, you know, the First Dude, and now it seems that I’m pregnant. What would the *Enquirer* pay for my story?

REPORTER: Do you have any proof that he’s the father?

NANNY: Actually, yes, I *do* have evidence--DNA, physical evidence, like in *CSI*--I saved what was left of his semen in the condoms.

REPORTER: But then how could you be pregnant?

NANNY: He told me that his wife makes tiny pinholes in the reservoir tips of his condoms [in Sarah’s voice] “in order to give all those *teeny little spermies* a fighting chance.”

REPORTER: Why doesn’t he just get a vasectomy?

NANNY: Sarah says that would be like cheating God . . .

[As the closing credits roll by, Britney Spears sings the program’s theme song, “Oops, I Did It Again.”]

SUBCULTURES

And Whose Little Monkey Are You?

Sometimes I think I’ m dreaming when I read the news. But there are places where the inhabitants have never seen a magazine or a newspaper, and it is simply not a part of their psyche to dream about lines of type. In a spurt of generosity, the United States shipped surplus battery-operated TV sets across the sea to one group of islands in the Pacific Ocean, so that those natives could pass directly from a preliterate society to a post-literate society without having to read a single book in the process.

They watched in amazement as so-called psychic Uri Geller bent forks on the Merv Griffin show. The strange thing was that even though Geller accomplished this feat by trickery, there were young children back in America who hadn’ t yet been taught about the self-fulfilling rules of 20th Century physics, and to their parents’ dismay, *they* were able to bend various kitchen utensils by means of sheer will power.

* * *

As more and more deadly conflicts around the world continue to escalate, more and more people are saying, “Boy, the shit’ s really gonna hit the fan now.” That phrase, incidentally, did not come into the language until after there was electricity. People say that they are not referring to a lovely Japanese lithograph showing a kimono-clad woman whose long shiny black hair is twisted up into a bun, and who is coquettishly providing her own personal breeze with a colorful rice-paper fan. Then *splat!*—right in her porcelain-like face. So, no, it has to be an *electric* fan, which revolves so fast it protects you from the shit—or spreads it, depending which side you’re on—or what’s a fan *for*?

Meanwhile, even as all that shit is hitting all those fans, the laxative industry continues to blossom. New brand names are constantly competing in the open marketplace. Ex-Lax has even come out with a “milder” version for women—certainly an indication of rampant male chauvinism in their Research & Development section. What’s the implication of this trend? Do females have different digestive systems than males? Is it perfectly acceptable for macho men to have chocolate-covered sandpaper coursing through their intestinal tracts?

And yet credit must also be given to those friendly folks at Ex-Lax. They were the very first sponsor on television to include a sign-language translation of a commercial—a long-overdue service for the constipated hearing-impaired. Indeed, this had been an early demand of the Deaf

Liberation Front. You’ ve probably seen their frontline members on the street and in airports, selling little cards with the sign-language alphabet. Some have been getting arrested for being deaf without a license. Naturally, the police recite their Miranda rights, shouting, “*You have the right to remain silent!*"

Anyway, this particular Ex-Lax commercial features a pleasant, matronly woman reminiscing through her family photo album while a young fellow in the corner of the screen ostensibly translates the message into sign language. Actually, he can say whatever he wants. Nobody monitors his translation. He can indulge in private jokes for all the deaf viewers and only they will know.

The matronly woman in the Ex-Lax commercial says: “Thank God my family is *normal*.” The young fellow shifts the emphasis slightly in his translation: “Thank God *her* family is normal.” She continues: “Of course, once in a while somebody in our family will be troubled by irregularity.” He translates: “No shit.” She concludes: “So then we do what we’ ve done in our family for generations—we turn to an old friend, Ex-Lax.” He translates: “Jimmy Hoffa knows too much.”

And while the hearing-impaired at home giggle at this mistranslation, all over the globe the shit continues to hit the fans.

* * *

These are rough times, but it’s extremely important to develop a sense of optimism. The *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* periodically updates a clock on their cover to indicate how close we’re moving toward nuclear war. Recently they moved it from four minutes to midnight to three minutes to midnight, with midnight representing total annihilation. I don’t know exactly what their time scale is—whether one minute represents a month or a year or a decade—but, whichever, they’re saying that we are all now only three minutes away from the ultimate holocaust.

That’s the bad news.

The good news is that atomic scientists are just as fucked-up as the rest of us. They overeat, they forget to floss, they don’t have time for serial orgasms, or they suffer from premature ejaculations, and they set their clocks fifteen minutes ahead so that if they need to mail a letter by six o’clock and their clock says it’s ten after six, it means they still have five minutes to get to the mailbox. So that clock on the cover of the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* is fifteen minutes fast. We don’t have just three minutes till doomsday; we have *eighteen* minutes.

* * *

Life remains peaceful on a certain island off the coast of Japan. Here, humans and animals live in peace and harmony.

There are monkeys who for eons have subsisted entirely on sweet potatoes. They would pick the sweet potatoes right out of the dirt in which they grow—eating them, dirt and all. This is the way they have always done it. But one day, for whatever mysterious reason, an individual young female monkey carried her sweet potato to the shore, washed the dirt off in the ocean and proceeded to eat the sweet potato.

Who knows why it was this particular monkey? Any explanation will suffice. Maybe she was an Aries, with a strong pioneer spirit. At any rate, once this monkey broke the ice, other monkeys began to wash the dirt off their sweet potatoes before they ate them. But only the young monkeys.

It was not until the 100th young monkey had washed the dirt off a sweet potato in the ocean--not exactly the 100th; it could’ve been the 93rd or the 108th; the 100th monkey is merely a metaphor for reaching critical mass—but not until then did the first *adult* monkey wash the dirt off a sweet potato. This was a case of reverse generational influence.

And then *other* adult monkeys started to imitate this behavior. Washing the dirt off sweet potatoes even began to occur on adjoining islands, indicating that there was some kind of psychic communication in the air.

Now, how can this living New Age parable be applied to *human* behavior? Well, whatever you do personally to help further the cause of justice and the pursuit of ecstasy, even though you might get discouraged, you must always remember that you might be the one who turns the tide—you have to act as though *you* are the 100th monkey—and this gives us reason to hope.

That’s the good news.

The bad news is, those monkeys *needed* that dirt in their diet for roughage. So now there were all these monkeys on this island who weren’t able to shit.

But it just so happened that this was one of the islands where we shipped our surplus TV sets. Across the island, monkeys were gathered around those TV sets, all watching a program that was sponsored by Ex-Lax. Moreover, here was that commercial with the sign-language translation. And, fortuitously enough, these monkeys had relatives trained at Stanford University, where they learned how to communicate in sign language, and had been returned to the island to teach others of their species how to sign.

That’ s the good news.

The bad news is that this was the Ex-Lax commercial where the brand name of the product was not translated. The message in sign language was “Jimmy Hoffa knows too much.” These monkeys—serving as shock troops of the Deaf Liberation Front—took that private joke to be their marching orders. So, even though you may have heard the propaganda that Hoffa was killed because he was prepared to speak out about the alliance between military intelligence and organized crime, the truth is that he was eaten to death by hordes of constipated monkeys.

The good news is, they washed the dirt off him first.

* * *

It is several years later now. Things have returned to normalcy.

The monkeys on those islands off the coast of Japan still watch TV, but they no longer wash the dirt off their sweet potatoes, and they are just as regular in their defecation as they used to be.

But in America, those children who once bent kitchen utensils to the dismay of their parents have grown up. One such young man now works on the assembly line in a missile factory, and he is able to bend certain working parts out of shape through the use of sheer will power. Soon others will follow suit. Already the intelligence agencies are training their operatives in methods to counteract this kind of psychic sabotage.

The Mime and the Pacer

I found myself walking around and around in a counter-clockwise circle on the stage of the Wallenboyd Theater in downtown Los Angeles, just as a young man known as the Pacer does for several hours every day, always in the same direction, at the exact same spot in the mididle of the boardwalk in Venice Beach. He is an inspiration to me and I sometimes talk about him in my performances.

The boardwalk in Venice is both literally and figuratively on the edge of this country. T-shirts are the hieroglyphics of our time. Here, a grungy wino, who needed a shave long before Don Johnson made stubble fashionable, is wearing a T-shirt that says "Yes, I Am a Model." There, a nerdy tourist is trying not to let the pizza drip on his T-shirt that says "I Choked Linda Lovelace" (the porn star of *Deep Throat).*

The boardwalk resembles one of those double-page-spread montages in a children's book showing many different modes of transportation being used simultaneously. Airplanes fly by, trailing printed messages such as "The New Dating Game Wants You," and

“Scientology, Give Us Our Money Back,” while below, roller-skaters and skate-boarders mingle with cops riding bicycles and Hare Krishnas preparing for their annual parade featuring an elephant nourished entirely on trail mix.

A lone Jesus freak walks along and yells at them— “Antichrist! Antichrist! Antichrist!” —trying to drown out their chant. “Repent, Krishna! People are starving in India every day because these foolish Krishnas refuse to eat the cow! Eat the cow and believe in Jesus Christ! Repent, Krishna!”

You can buy all types of stuff along the boardwalk—rainbow sunglasses and fake Rolex watches and falafel-shaped yo-yo’s. “But,” complains a flower vendor who pays $600 a month for a ten-by-two-foot space, “rent will be going up to $800 and then to $1200 by summer. Venice will eventually be inhabited by a bunch of wealthy lot owners and a population of slaves who work for them.”

However, the performers pay no rent, dependent on voluntary donations. There is a poet who speaks professional gibberish; an artist who draws on the ground with colored chalk; a fellow who juggles an electric chainsaw, a bowling ball, and an apple, for which strangers put money in his hat because they’re grateful to God that *they* don’t have to do such a bizarre thing to earn a living.

There is a woman who plays the violin while standing on her head. And a man who has a table covered with wine glasses of different sizes filled to varying heights with water, and he plays this musical instrument by rubbing his fingers around the tops of those wine glasses. Audiences gather spontaneously to here his rendition of a Mozart sonata or a ragtime melody or the theme from *Chariots of Fire*.

There are breakdancers who bring their own personal linoleum-floor sections, and a jogger who jumps hurdles over the endless row of garbage cans lined along the boardwalk. He has to avoid one garbage can because a homeless person is foraging for lunch.

If I had to choose my favorite moment on the boardwalk, it would have to be the time a Rastafarian yogi was standing on the very top of a wooden chair, preparing to jump barefoot onto a pile of freshly broken bottles. “This is serious shit,” he reminded the large semicircle of onlookers. And then, during the anticipatory silence, along came that Jesus freak. Upon seeing this crowd, he edged his way in. Now the Rastafarian yogi was poised upon that unseen edge between “Look before you leap” and “He who hesitates is lost.” Suddenly the Jesus freak called out, “Hey, wait, before you commit suicide there, how do you feel about abortion?”

* * *

In front of the Sidewalk Café on the boardwalk, the Mime, a black man wearing white gloves along with a tuxedo and top hat, just stands still—often for hours. He is listening to a stereo headset. One might think he was playing music to counteract the boredom, but it’s really a tape loop reminding him, “Don’t move, stay still, it doesn’t matter if your back itches, people are paying you not to scratch . . . ”

Passersby do indeed put cash in the cardboard box at his feet after they have gaped at him long enough to get their money’s worth. Standing still is his job. People pay him not to move. When he goes to the Unemployment office, a clerk asks, “Did you look for work this week?” He answers simply, “Yes, I stood on the corner of Hollywood and Vine, and then I stood on the corner of Beverly Boulevard and Sierra Bonita, and then I stood . . . ”

In contrast to the Mime is the Pacer, who intrigues me most. He doesn’t call himself the Pacer. He may not even know that others do. But the circle he walks around and around in is his turf. Even an occasional police car respects the force field he creates, and the cops drive around him.

Obviously he originally started this strange stint as a matter of choice. “I think I’ll walk around in circles on the boardwalk today.” And the next day. And the next. But somewhere along the way, walking around in circles became a compulsion, and *it* started doing *him*. When you play a role long enough, the role can begin to play you if you’re not careful.

I’ve been out at six o’clock in the morning and there was the Pacer walking in circles. I’ve been out at six o’clock in the evening and there was the Pacer walking in circles. He does stop to eat—which indicates that at some level he is still acting voluntarily. He walks in a straight line to a greasy-spoon diner nearby on the boardwalk and sits at the counter, but he doe not twirl on his stool, nor stir his coffee, nor roll his eyes.

Once he talked about his obsessive activity: “I’m in control of walking, but out of control too. When I walk I’m in a trance. If I slow down at night I see colors. I see millions of faces—some with Pilgrim hats, some with cowboy hats—modern faces and prehistoric faces.”

There must be some kind of spiritual path that the sweating, red-faced Pacer keeps treading, even if it’s circular--some unique relationship with the universe by which he justifies his existence to himself. Everybody has to feel they' re making *some* contribution to society, if only to maintain self-esteem. Even those who work in a missile factory must rationalize, "Well, the United States needs to have a strong defense."

It' s an absurd age we live in. *Future Shock* is already an outdated book. Children whose shoes stay on their feet by the grace of Velcro may never experience the thrill of tying their shoelaces in the dark. They have developed a fast-food approach to perceiving time because all they know is digital clocks. Time goes *click, click,* and if the power goes off they think that 12:00-12:00-12:00 is appliance language for "Help! Help! Help! Turn me back to the right time! Help! Help! Help!"

Kids have lost that certain sense of time in motion, going around and around, eternally. That concept is endangered, just like the whooping crane. But we can all be grateful to the Pacer, for he is the Keeper of the Counter-Clockwise. *That* is his spiritual calling. But the Pacer doesn' t have a cardboard box for people to drop money into—he walks around in circles out of the goodness of his heart.

* * *

The Mime and the Pacer provide a perfect metaphor for the two-party system in America. The Republicans are like the Mime, standing absolutely still while the world passes them by—Iran, Iraq, Nicaragua, El Salvador—and they get paid for it, just like the Mime. The Democrats are like the Pacer, walking around in circles while the world passes them by—Israel, Libya, Cuba, Honduras—and they *don't* get paid for it, just like the Pacer.

But recently the Pacer did something that hurled such a comparison right into the metaphor graveyard, along with "That's like bringing coals to Newcastle" (for Newcastle finally *did* run out of coal) and "Good as gold" (since the government now prints money without the benefit of the gold standard). The Pacer had put a cardboard box down on the ground and started walking around it. And now people began giving him money.

By the mere presence of that cardboard box, the Pacer had transformed his personal perversion into a marketable talent. Just like so many of us. And I could no longer feel superior to him. He was not just some nut walking in circles. Now he was earning a living.

I still "do" the Pacer in my act, but with increased respect. "His job is no less dignified than anything *we* do," I tell the audience. "He works hard all day, and then, just like you and me, he goes home and unwinds." And I proceed to walk around and around in a circle onstage, only now in a clockwise direction.

Johnnie Cochran Meets Dr. Hip

Tragedy and absurdity were two sides of the same coin: On one side, O.J. Simpson’s “suicide” note with a smiley face in the O of his signature; on the other side, the woman who pinched Simpson lawyer Robert Shapiro’s ass because “I wanted to be part of history.” And somewhere along the ridge of that coin was Simpson himself, walking into the courtroom humming the melody of “Touch Me” from the Broadway hit *Cats* and explaining to reporters that he was thinking about his children.

That was at Simpson’s criminal trial. Shortly before his civil trial began in 1997, I met his lead attorney, Johnnie Cochran. He was the guest of honor and luncheon speaker at a national convention of criminal defense attorneys held in a huge banquet hall at a hotel in Santa Monica. No media people were allowed entry.

One of the attendees was Dr. Eugene Schoenfeld, also known as Dr. Hip from his days as a syndicated columnist for the underground press. He now testifies occasionally as an expert witness, and was at this event for that reason. My wife Nancy and I were his guests.

Cochran’s speech reassured the enthusiastic audience: “In the Simpson matter, we just did what *you* do every *day*” —that is, defend their clients by any means necessary and chalk up a bunch of billable hours in the process—and he got a standing ovation.

In the afterglow of his speech, colleagues came up to Cochran to shake his hand and get in a little banter. One well-wisher shared this joke: “If [prosecutor] Chris Darden spent as much time trying to nail O.J. Simpson as he did trying to nail [prosecutor] Marcia Clark, he might’ve won the case.” The other defense attorneys within hearing distance all had a good laugh at that one.

Dr. Schoenfeld joined the line of lawyers waiting to have photos taken of themselves standing alongside Cochran. When it was Schoenfeld’s turn, Nancy focused her camera. For this particular occasion, Schoenfeld had stashed a hand-printed card underneath the standard, plastic-encased ID lapel card. As in the previous poses, Cochran and Schoenfeld put their arms around each other, although they were looking, not at each other, but straight ahead and smiling at the camera.

Thus, Cochran didn’t notice how, just before Nancy snapped their picture, Schoenfeld subtly managed to pull away the ID card and reveal the hand-printed card, which declared, in large printed letters, “O.J. DID

IT!" I published that photo on the front cover of *The Realist* that spring. It was the result of a good old-fashioned guerrilla action.

Jealousy At the Swingers Convention

The 24th annual Lifestyles Couples Convention has filled three hotels in Palm Springs, California. The Convention Center is connected to one of them, the Wyndham, which surrounds a large outdoor pool and patio populated by couples busy socializing in 116-degree dry heat. Women and men alike are wearing thongs. From afar they appear like so many eyeless smiley faces among the bathing suits. The law that Sonny Bono signed when he was mayor, banning thongs in public, does not apply to this event, or, for that matter, to Cher.

The convention is for couples only. Except for me. I’ve been hired to perform stand-up comedy at their Friday luncheon, and I’m here alone. On the small, propellor plane from Los Angeles to Palm Springs, the right side consists of two-seat rows, occupied entirely by couples on their way to the convention—horny with the expectation of getting laid by the spouse of a stranger, perhaps sitting in front of or behind them—and the left side of the plane consists of one-seat rows, occupied entirely by me. I’m afraid that the plane might tip over upon trying to land.

At the Convention Center, even the plastic-encased lapel nametags are coupled off: “Ken and Barbie” on his, “Barbie and Ken” on hers. Not all the couples are paired off in real lie, though. One person can simply bring along another—known in swinger circles as a “ticket” for gender balance—in order to get into the convention. So everybody has entered two by two, and I feel like a unicorn stowaway on Noah’s Ark, surreptitiously balancing on the cusp of love and lust.

There are 3,000 participants at this convention, mostly upper-middle-class, in their 30s, 40s and 50s. They consider people in the outside world to be “straight,” even though one would ordinarily consider *them* straight. I mean there are suburban soccer moms here, openly celebrating their secret lifestyle at an oasis of supportiveness. There’s a man in a suit with a flesh-colored penis necktie, another wearing a T-shirt declaring “I’m Not Going Bald, I’m Getting More Head,” and another dressed only in a leather jockstrap, who recognizes me and introduces himself.

“I’d give you my card,” he says, “but I have no place to keep them.”

Inside the 100,000 square-foot Convention Center, the Exhibit Hall has been turned into an “Adult Marketplace,” buzzing with commercial activity. I overhear one shopper’s complaint: “But we’ve *already* spent

$400." There' s a multitude of merchandise on display—pornographic videos, naughty lingerie, fetish paraphernalia, edible lotions—plus booths galore. At the Golden Nipples booth, women are cheerfully having exact duplicates of their nipples created in sterling silver or 14-karat gold, which can be used as pendants, key fobs, money clips or—yes, of course—nipple covers. At the Penimax booth, an Asian vendor is selling disposable cock rings, which, he promises, will maintain my erection even after I ejaculate.

There are several booths dedicated to booking vacations especially designed for swingers, at nude beaches, clothing-optional resorts and ocean cruises. I follow around an elderly woman who is busy picking up brochures at every such booth. It seems incongruous, but I try not to indulge in stereotypes. Finally I engage her in a conversation, and she explains that her boss told her to get as much material as she could, because he owns some property surrounded by government land, and he wants to start a new business.

At the Erotic Massage Wear table, a woman uses my arm to demonstrate a device that turns her fingertip into a vibrator, not intended for nose picking. Then she puts Jergen' s Lotion on my right hand, dons a pair of Love Mitts—made of vinyl with little nubs all over—and proceeds to massage my hand while on the VCR there' s a tape of a woman wearing Love Mitts and massaging a man’ s lubricated penis. This is a bizarre mixed-media sensation. Although I don’ t get a hard-on, the lobes of my brain seem to fuse, and for the next few hours my left hand persists in feeling neglected.

Checking out the functional furniture, I merely eavesdrop on a (fully clothed) couple testing out the “rocking torso feature” on a Love Table, but I actually *climb into* the Love Swing, assuming a position ordinarily assumed by a woman while the man stands up, crotch to crotch. My body is suspended half upside-down in mid-air with legs spread and feet up in stirrups. I’ m feeling mighty vulnerable. As I hang there, the inventor hands me my tape recorder, then proceeds to show me how “the woman can place the man’ s penis on her G-spot by moving her legs from a position of being out front like this to being in the fetal position” and how “the man, instead of just going in and out like that, he can make his penis a joystick, so every step he takes is a movement inside of her, more like a dance step.” He guarantees, “You’ ll never use a bed again.”

Next I inspect the Bungee Sexperience—a harness designed by a company that makes bungee cords—it bounces in the air, so the “rider” can enjoy weightless sex in a variety of positions. I ask the woman demonstrating this how many hours a day she bounces up and down. “At an event like this," she responds, without missing a bounce, "I' d say eight to twelve hours." She tells me that her circulation is excellent, and that her 18-year-old son refers to the contraption as a "bungee humper." In addition to bouncing, it can also create "the illusion of bondage, yet the person can actually be comfortable while restrained."

The Auto Erotic Chair, however, provides *real* bondage. It' s equipped with leather restraints and panic snaps for arms and legs, and comes complete with a power box, pneumatically operated anal and vaginal plugs. "Our power source unit is designed to stimulate nerve fibers throughout the genital areas by delivering controllable electro-pulse energy through conductive electrodes on our sex toys. Our precision-engineered technology gives you safe and pleasurable electric play." So, for example, in the Electro-Flex Penile Ring/Anal Plug Configuration, "A single conductor butt plug is used in conjunction with a single conductive cock ring to complete the circuit. With a single conductive cock ring, one side of a double conductive butt plug can be used to stimulate either the prostate or the sphincter."

If you' d prefer something, well, less electric, there' s always the Crystal Wand, a 10-inch-long, *S*-shaped co-ed tool, hand-carved from pure crystal-clear acrylic, that doubles simultaneously as a G-spot stimulator and prostate massager. I’m reminded of a swing party I heard about, one that took place at the Whispers Club in Michigan. Couples removed from the refrigerator 12-inch summer sausages and cucumbers that the hostess had planned to use for food that evening. When she walked into the “party room,” she couldn’t help but notice that although the food was being consumed, it was not exactly in the fashion she had originally envisioned. Instead, the sausages and cucumbers were being utilized as organic sex toys.

As I continue to wander around the Adult Marketplace, I realize that the name of the game is penetration. All paths lead to penetration. But I’m not referring to penetration of the sexual kind, although that’s an implicit goal—pick an orifice, any orifice, and there’s always a corresponding appendage or gadget that can fulfill its desire for penetration—no, I’m talking about penetration of the *market*. There’s lots of money to be made here. The persistent question is, how can I penetrate this market? Maybe I could come up with a combination FM radio and vibrating dildo.

* * *

I’m beginning to feel like I’m experiencing an alien encounter, only *I’m* the alien here. Nevertheless, I’m aware that swingers and comedians do have something in common. We both like to have a good opening line. As a performer, I always try to slant my opening line toward a particular audience.

My opening line at the World Hemp Expo was, “Last night, for the first time in my life, I used a hemp condom.” My opening line at a Skeptics Conference, attended by the Amazing Randi and the Amazing Kreskin, was: “The is the first conference I’ve been to where there were two people with the same first name of Amazing—but the Amazing Randi was born with that name, it’s on his birth certificate, whereas the Amazing Kreskin changed his name for showbiz--his real name is the Obnoxious Kreskin.” And my opening line at a luncheon during the Los Angeles County Bar Association conference was, “I’d like to begin with a moment of silence, so that you can think about your client’s problem, and then you can make this a billable hour.”

Now I find myself in a lavish hotel suite, trying to crystallize an opening line while contemplating the bald spot on the back of my head, infinitely cloned in the mirrors of the hotel-room bathroom, actually the only place I ever get to *see* that bald spot as others do. This will be a serious opening line, since I have been told that, in the introduction to my performance, I will be presented with the Lifestyles Freedom Award. I decide that my opening line will then be, “I just want to say that freedom of expression existed long before the First Amendment.” Though it’s not my motivation, I realize that this opening line will undoubtedly please Robert McGinley, the bearded co-founder and president of the Lifestyles Organization.

“We hate government intervention in our lives,” he has assured me. “We hate censorship. We’re against laws that require helmets for cyclists. It’s good that a law was just passed allowing women to breastfeed in public, but we shouldn’t need permission from the government to do it.” He admits to being “libertarian, but not Libertarian Party.” He draws his philosophy from Jack London—“The proper function of man is to live, not to exist”—and, more specifically, his credo is “Adult sexuality is normal.” Dr. McGinley (he holds a Ph.D. in counseling psychology) tells me a riddle: “What do you call an Italian swinger?” I give up. The answer: “A swop.”

At the luncheon, it turns out that I will *not* be presented with the Freedom Award after all, and I have to come up immediately with a replacement opening line: “I’m delighted to be at the Lifestyles Convention—this is the first convention I’ve ever been to that was named after a condom.”

Indeed, condom consciousness (if not condom use) is present at the convention. In one workshop, “The ABC’s of Swinging,” condom etiquette is described as bringing “the right safety equipment, just as you would for scuba diving or parachuting.” Another presentation on “Safer Sex” covers new drug therapies for AIDS, information on other sexually transmitted diseases that are increasing among heterosexuals, and “things you should be doing to protect yourself.”

Originally, herpes had caused a certain panic in swinger circles. Some swing clubs closed, though private parties increased. But, paradoxically enough, with the advent of AIDS, *new* clubs opened, as if the disease were anti-climactic. Currently, there’s a surge of growth in this subculture—thanks to the Internet—with estimates ranging from 2,000 to three million participants. And, according to Dr. McGinley, “There’s been very little increase in condom use. It’s the woman’s choice.”

Nonetheless, at the Adult Marketplace, a woman in a black lace negligee roams around giving out free samples of condoms. There are also Crème Cookie Condoms for sale. They appear to be vanilla and chocolate Oreo-style cookies, individually wrapped in cellophane. I ask the vendor whether these are condoms that look like cookies, or cookies that look like condoms. She tells me that they are edible cookies, but each one has a condom inside.

"They're only a dollar each," she says, adding, as I edge away from her booth, "it's a great joke."

* * *

The Art Gallery at the convention Center, featuring the Lifestyles Convention's 7th annual Sensual & Erotic Art Exhibition, almost didn't happen. The state's Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control had tried to prevent it from opening. When their authority was challenged, an ABC representative became an alchemist, transforming logic into absurdity. Legally, he said, you can't even have sex in a hotel room which has a mini-bar. Sure, pal, just try to enforce *that* one.

Two days before the convention, the ACLU obtained a restraining order against ABC's interference with the art exhibit. But ABC didn't just give up and assume the fetal position in a Love Swing. Rather, the agency threatened to revoke the Wyndham Hotel's liquor license if they allowed a special two-hour session, the convention's traditional Evening of Caressive Intimacy, to take place in the Wyndham Ballroom on Friday as scheduled. This popular, closed-door, clothing-optional massage clinic, limited to the first 200 couples who sign up, would include the "human car wash,” involving, as one veteran swinger portrays it, “a lot of naked bodies and some serious rubbing.”

But the ABC regulations on Attire and Conduct—behavior “deemed contrary to public welfare and morals, and therefore no on-sale license shall be held at any premises where such conduct or acts are permitted” —includes this clause as a no-no: “To encourage or permit any person on the licensed premises to touch, caress or fondle the breasts, buttocks, anus or genitals of any other person.” The Wyndham chickens out, the massage clinic is canceled, the money is refunded, Lifestyles will sue the hotel for breach of contract, and next year’ s convention will be held in Las Vegas in 1998.

A lawyer, standing on the border of cynicism, suggests, “Just buy a town in Mexico and buy off all the officials.”

In the previous year, 1996, the convention was held at the Town & Country Hotel in San Diego (for the fourth time), but two ABC officers claimed that they witnessed oral copulation in the convention hall, and the hotel’ s liquor license was suspended for five days, hence Lifestyle’ s move to Palm Springs this year. Lately, ABC has been spreading its particular brand of paranoia in Los Angeles, where the agency has raided gay, black and Latino bars in Los Angeles and in Hermosa Beach, where it has imposed restrictions on restaurants, requiring patio patrons to order food with their drinks, and forbidding customers to dance. Proprietors now play less upbeat music so that nobody will be tempted to dance. Those who can’t resist are asked to stop.

Incidentally, I find out that, instead of giving the Freedom Award to me, convention officials have decided to present ABC with an Anti-Freedom Award, but that notion gets lost somewhere in award limbo, along with my original unspoken opening line.

On Friday night, the massage clinic that doesn’t take place is followed by the Wild West Casino and Dance. One man comes attired in a sheriff’s outfit with a rubber penis drooping almost to the floor. A security guard tells him that he’ll have to check it. Fake knives, guns and bullets are acceptable, but not a fake sex organ. Another cowboy, with a *real* (unloaded) gun, is stopped by a security guard, but he resists, asserting in his best John Wayne manner, “This is an 1887 pistol, and I’m not about to check it.”

Several folks leave the dance at midnight to attend an unofficial 3rd annual spanking party. It ends at 3 a.m. with a bout of fist fucking. Dear Abby was right. One thing *does* lead to another.

* * *

I’ve been sampling many workshops at the Convention Center, and I notice that whenever I sit down on a chair next to a chair with someone else’s stuff on it, and the owner of that stuff is sitting on the other side of that chair, they always tap the top of their stuff in a subconscious gesture of territoriality. I also observe that a man with one leg (he walks with crutches) and his wife seem to arrive at every single workshop that I attend. Hmmmmm. I’m beginning to get suspicious. Obviously, I’ve seen too many spy movies.

A cartoon in the 1991 convention program showed two rooms where lectures were being given. The attendees in the room featuring “Do It Yourself Porn: Make Your Own XXX Movies” were overflowing into the corridor, while the room featuring “Socio-Political Ramifications of Current Trends in the Erosion of Civil Liberties” was empty, except for the baffled lecturer. It was a nice touch of self-deprecating humor, an exaggeration not too far from reality. At this ’97 convention, porn actress Nina Hartley’s “So You Want to Throw a Party: Recipes for a Successful Orgy” attracts ten times more audience than attorney Bob Burke’s “Sexual Politics: A Behind the Scenes Look.”

Unfortunately, one workshop, “The Undertone of Sexuality in the *Star Trek* Series,” has been canceled— “due,” someone added to the notice, “to Federation Regulations and Star Fleet Emergency Order 1007-932.” Deborah Warner, in describing her presentation, had written: “Paramount and its parent company, Viacom, have a vested interest in presenting the *Trek* franchise as a family-oriented show. To this end, they overtly depict the characters as asexual. Yet there exists erotic subtext. This has spawned a very large community of fans who create volumes of explicit erotica that is enjoying great popularity in print and an explosion of interest on the Internet.”

Now, outside the room where her workshop would have been, there is disappointment-- “Oh, and she was gonna bring a Klingon” --and nostalgia-- “Remember the time Quark and Deanna were French-kissing?”

That theme continues at “American Tantra: How to Worship Each Other in Bed,” This workshop—whose motto, “Orgasm long and prosper,” paraphrases *Star Trek’s* blessing, “Live long and prosper” —is conducted by Paul Ramana Das and Marilena Silbey. “Interspecies intercourse,” he muses. “This can’t be the only planet where love is made.” A writer for *AVN* (Adult Video News) has reviewed their *Intimate Secrets of Sex & Spirit* and confessed, “I’ve rarely laughed so hard in my life. No shit, this vid earns a pre-nomination for ‘most outrageous sex scene.' Paul actually uses Marilena's pussy as an echo chamber!"

Now, in his regular voice, he is telling our workshop of the need to "approach the body, not for sexual release, but for every single inch of this body, the groundwork, the geography of pleasure. Can anybody name one spot on your body that is not capable of receiving pleasure?" Nobody can. Later, the entire audience, seated around the perimeter of this extra-large room, is instructed to come stand in the center area and face their partners. I start to slide out, but not inconspicuously enough. Ramana Das, who knows me from a previous incarnation, calls out, "There goes Paul Krassner. Are you afraid to participate?"

"I'm here as a journalist."

"Ah, he can't participate because he's a journalist. See how everybody has excuses."

Suddenly I'm saddled with a dose of New Age guilt, as though I have aborted my inner child. Meanwhile, there's a lovely blonde who doesn't have a partner, and now I'm tempted to participate, but some guy who's also without a partner links up with her. Unexpectedly, my guilt changes to jealousy. Just a slight pang of jealousy, mind you, but a terrible taboo in this particular world.

Jealousy is an outmoded emotion to be shunned like dandruff. There’s even a workshop that advises “How to Handle Jealousy” and another titled “Swing Without Guilt or Jealousy.” And so now I not only feel guilty about not participating, I also feel guilty about feeling jealous. I’ve committed a swinger crime. I can hear security guards shouting “Jealousy alert!” Loud sirens go off. “Jealousy alert!”

Now where will I go? I have been reading about tantra in *Real Magic* by Isaac Bonewits: “Energy control is a very important part of the exercises; it is essential, for example, that during *Kama-kali* the male be able to refrain from ejaculating under the most harrowing circumstances.” I decide to drop in on a workshop, “How to Prevent Premature Ejaculation,” but everybody has already been there, and they all left early. Sorry. I blurted that out before I could stop myself.

* * *

There are swing clubs all around the country, from “Shenanigans” in Indiana to “Liberated Christians” in Arizona (“for Christians seeking liberation from false sexual repression based on mistranslation of scripture who wish to explore responsible non-monogamy and polyfidelity”). Many clubs designate themselves as Equal Opportunity Lifestyle Organizations, where membership is open to all races, and they belong to NASCA (North American Swing Club Association).

The Spring 1997 issue of *NASCA Inside Report* editorializes:

"There are political attacks on freedom that citizens should be aware of. It is far too easy to lose, through complacency and ignorance, the freedom that we Americans cherish. These attacks include the proposed censorship of the Internet now under review by the U.S. Supreme Court, the recently court-upheld attempts by states to keep 'harmful' literature from the eyes of children by controlling street news racks, the reintroduction in Pennsylvania of legislation to outlaw swing clubs and a similar measure in California. Regarding the latter two, do we smell a conspiracy here?" If there is one, it's bi-partisan.

In Pennsylvania, Richard Kasunic, a Democratic state senator, failed in his 1996 attempt to outlaw "sex clubs." This year, he has reintroduced legislation to outlaw "swinger clubs." He states, "My bill will outlaw these immoral establishments in every community in Pennsylvania and provide significant penalties for those who choose to continue this offensive practice." The penalty for operating a swing club, even in one's own home: up to two years in jail and $5,000 in fines. For a second conviction: up to seven years and $15,000. For patronizing a swing club: $300 plus court costs.

In California, Tim Leslie, a Republican state senator, has introduced a bill which would provide that "every building or place which, as a primary activity, accommodates or encourages persons to engage in, or to observe other persons engaging in, sexual conduct including, but not limited to, anal intercourse, oral copulation or vaginal intercourse, is a nuisance and shall be enjoined, abated and prevented, and for which damages may be recovered, whether it is a public or private nuisance."

Swinger periodicals range from *New Friends* to *Fuck Thy Neighbor*. Patti Thomas, author of *Recreational Sex: An Insider's Guide to the Swinging Lifestyle*, is editor at *Connection*, which publishes thirteen titles, including *Cocoa 'n Crème*, catering to interracial swingers (not to be confused with *Black 'n Blue*, catering to sadomasochist swingers). *Connection* is suing the federal government over a bill that Ronald Reagan sent to Congress in 1987, the Child Protection and Obscenity Act, an outgrowth of the Meese Commission on Pornography.

The specific statute being challenged—known as the record keeping and labeling law, or the ID law—was supposed to be aimed at child pornography, but has been applied to adults-only swing publications. It requires anyone placing an explicit photo ad to provide a photo ID, nicknames, maiden names, stage names, professional names and aliases. These records must be available for inspection by the attorney general’s office.

Connection had attempted to comply with the law by cutting out every explicit photo ad from its magazines and sending them with a letter to those advertisers, explaining the new law and its requirements, asking that they submit the proper ID or send a “soft” photo that didn’t require ID. Out of 500 advertisers, only 26 responded with IDs. Patti Thomas spoke about this in her keynote speech at the Conclave ’97 Convention in Chicago:

“It definitely makes it difficult to produce the magazine our readers and subscribers have come to expect, when you don’t have enough so-called ‘legal’ ads to fill all those pages. And considering that *swinging itself is not illegal*, why should we have to ‘register our sexual choices’ with the government just to place a personal ad in a magazine? . . . I’ve never really thought of myself as an activist, or as one who was ‘politically involved,’ but over the last few years I think I’ve finally come to realizing that it’s going to be *necessary* to be involved, even if it does mean ‘exposing’ my lifestyle to those who would repress it. I am *fucking sick and tired of do-gooders* trying to tell me how I should live my life!"

In 1995, *Connection* filed a suit challenging the constitutionality of the law and seeking a permanent injunction. In 1997, the motion was denied. Attorneys filed an appeal and a motion for a temporary injunction relieving *Connection* from complying with the act during that appeal. The motion was granted.

"The justice system in this country just makes no sense to me whatsoever," Patti Thomas tells me. "As far as I know, once we do present our case to the Court of Appeals, if our decision isn't favorable, we will make every attempt to go to the Supreme Court. Our attorneys are the best First Amendment attorneys anywhere. Our lawsuit has been very costly, as you can imagine, but our company believes very strongly in fighting for our constitutional rights. Our suit was filed not only for the benefit of our company but because we felt that this outrageous law was totally infringing on the civil rights and freedoms of people involved in alternative lifestyles. Obviously, the average person involved in swinging would have no way of combating this law on their own."

I ask her whether attempts at repression have resulted in politicizing the swinger community.

“I’m afraid we haven’t been very successful,” she replies. “We try to inform our readers about political issues threatening our lifestyle and attempt to get them involved. Unfortunately, many in the lifestyle either don’t believe that the government will actually take away their rights or are too afraid to make a stand. Swingers who have been ‘exposed’ as active participants in the lifestyle have lost jobs, family, community standing and friends as a result.

“People I’ve personally known who have lost their jobs when their swinging activities were discovered just wouldn’t fight back because of the fear of further exposure through the publicity that could have been generated. As a matter of fact, my ex-husband was fired from a management position back in 1980 when someone discovered his photo in one our magazines and brought it to the attention of his superiors. Luckily, he was able to find a position with one of *Connection’s* affiliate companies. So we pretty much remain an ‘underground minority.’”

That point is underscored by a 29-year-old woman at the convention. “None of us like publicity,” she says. “None of us want to be out in the open. The business world is very conservative.” She is wearing an American flag bikini, although she has never heard of Abbie Hoffman. She was born the same year that he got arrested for wearing an

American flag shirt. Nor did she have any way of knowing that when he wore another American flag shirt on *The Merv Griffin Show*, his half of the TV screen was blocked out all across America. She was, in short, unaware of the roots of her own, limited freedom.

* * *

It’s Saturday night, and the Carnival Masquerade Ball is being held in the huge Convention Center Ballroom. On the wall behind the stage are gigantic masks. Above the tables are gold and purple balloons, fashioned after either somebody’s school colors or a Chinese restaurant’s little hot mustard and soy sauce plate. The taped music is loud, and the dancing is raunchy, enhanced by gaudy yellow, blue and red lights. Pheromones are flying, and the costumes are kinky.

“Costumes,” the program states, “may be anything of fertile imagination (genital area musts be covered) for an exotic night of adult social fun.” Hey, look who’s here: Superman. The Phantom of the Opera. The devil. Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse (in a see-through top). An executioner. An Arabian potentate. A gold-plated pharaoh. A chicken lady covered with big yellow feathers. A guy in a dog collar being led around on a leash. And the one-legged man, who is wearing a roller skate as his costume.

At one point, an announcement is made that the next dance number will be filmed, so anybody who doesn’t wish to be recognized should get off the dance floor. About 80% of the dancers leave. Similarly, taking part in the costume-judging means that permission to be photographed is automatically granted, which results in many contestants not making themselves available to be chosen as possible finalists.

The Best Male Costume goes to a 75-year-old man dressed as a biker stud. The Best Female Costume goes to his 75-year-old wife, dressed as a biker slut. The Best Couple’s Costume goes to a woman with *papier mache’* breasts the size of beach balls and her mate with matching enormous testicles but covered by pillowcases and a sign that warns, “Censored by the hotel and ABC.”

A marriage ceremony is performed onstage. The blissful pair have written their own vows; nothing is mentioned about forsaking all others. The newlyweds, their party and a few other couples are invited to a gathering in the suite of a three-time Emmy Award-winning TV producer and his wife. It turns out to be a tantra-filled wedding night. All the women massage the groom, and all the men massage the bride. One woman, a computer animator who wants to become a sexual surrogate, predicts that, as the millennium comes to an end, tantric men will be popping up everywhere.

A retired chairman and CEO of a title and escrow company, who attended another tantra party, tells me, “The difference between the tantra party and the party next door is the fact that at the beginning of the wedding tantra party there was a lot of ceremony and shared tantra ritual, but once we had experienced that, it was every person for themselves. It was like the party next door.” These were closed parties by invitation only. But you didn’t need an invitation for open parties. All you had to do was find them.

The Wyndham Hotel is permeated by a sense of uninhibitedness. In the elevator, a beautiful black woman is looking in the full-length mirror and admiring her new Clit Clip—non-piercing, adjustable, genital jewelry-- “not designed to be painful,” I learned at the Adult Marketplace, “just very sensual and aesthetically attractive. The Clit Clip is a long narrow, *U*-shaped piece of metal, designed to fit around the clitoris hood, with some light-catching Austrian crystals, in your choice of clear, red, blue and purple, dangling from the ends.” The woman in the elevator turns toward me and says, “Isn’t it nice?” Her husband smiles proudly.

“It’s charming,” I reply, “but what are you gonna do if the metal detector goes off at the airport?”

I leave them giggling in the elevator as I get off on a floor where I’ve heard there would be lots of action. I follow one group, but only the couple in front really knows where they’re going. But they happen to be on the way to their own room, and when they get there, they go in, close the door, and we are all left out in the corridor, looking like a perplexed ant farm. Everybody turns around. I am now at the front of the line, so I let them all pass by me as they head in the opposite direction, strolling briskly, except for the one-legged man with the roller skate and crutches, who is gliding gracefully along the carpet. Passersby are asked, in vain, “Where’s the party?” We finally find a room with a porn photo on the door, which is slightly open.

Inside, there are around fifty people in semi-darkness. Exhibitionists and voyeurs, together again. Here a blow job, there a copulation, everywhere an undulating juiciness. There is an unspoken homophobia—no man is relating sexually to another man—but there is lots of lesbian libido. In order to keep a low profile, I have ripped several pages out of my notebook and folded them in half, so that I can take notes unobtrusively.

However, a woman with a feather duster asks me to hold on to her panties. She is about to join a threesome on the king-sized bed near the bureau that I’m leaning against. I marvel at the choreography of this foursome. But they’re playing, and I’m working. Their moans become my background music.

I wasn’t *always* a wallflower at the orgy. I flash back 30 years to 1967 . . . I was at a Sexual Freedom League couples-only party on New Year’s Eve at a large theatrical studio in San Francisco. There were about 150 people dancing in the nude. Behind the closed curtains on the stage there were fifteen small mattresses in constant use by different couples.

I remember making love on one of those mattresses with a sweet flower child only fifteen minutes after we’d met. It was an exhilarating experience. We were on the front lines of the Sexual Revolution. We had to hold back from screaming out political slogans at our moment of climax. The seeds of contemporary swinging were planted at that party, but who could have known it would blossom into an industry?

* * *

If it’s true that, as Bill Maher once stated so poetically, “The real problem with marriage is that it’s just very difficult to bump your uglies with the same person every night your whole life,” then for some people, swinging is the answer. To them, cheating is not an issue, unfaithfulness is obsolescent, and adultery is merely a concept that deprived former Air Force Lieutenant Kelly Flinn of her opportunity to drop a nuclear bomb.

The Lifestyles Convention provides a nurturing environment for these couples the same way a convention of crossword-puzzle enthusiasts or barbed-wire collectors would provide for *those* folks. Yet, in the case of swingers, one is left with a puzzle. Is impersonal intimacy an oxymoron? I ask that question of psychologist Stella Resnick, sex therapist and author of *The Pleasure Zone*. Her reply:

“We can’t put a value judgment on this. These are all consenting adults. It doesn’t really matter that it’s rather impersonal because they are in long-term relationships, so they’re getting their intimacy needs met, but not necessarily their needs for excitement in sex, and this is certainly a way to do it. Often they are sexually identified in the sense that they’re sexual people, they have strong desires, they’re not necessarily into politics or other causes, but this is a good cause—being in the body, being healthy—and it’s a way of relaxing and enjoying their bodies. Whatever turns you on, as long as you’re not doing any damage to anybody else and you’re taking care of yourself, fine, enjoy.”

When Tom Arnold was a guest on *Late Show*, David Letterman pressed him about his friendship with Kathie Lee and Frank Gifford. This was shortly after the *Globe* had entrapped and videotaped Gifford’s extramarital tryst with a flight attendant in a hotel room. Letterman insisted, “I don’t revel in the miseries of others,” but Arnold reminded him of his monologues with jokes about Gifford. Letterman defended himself: “It’s part of the job.” Arnold stammered, searching for just the right words. He finally found them: “Frank Gifford took a bullet for a lot of us.” And the audience applauded the accuracy of his assessment.

Certainly, non-celebrities don’t have to worry about supermarket tabloids revealing infidelities to *their* spouses. Such exposure could never occur with swinging couples, not only because, as a rule, they are honest with each other, but also because they party *with* each other, so there are no surprises. They are sharing a secret lifestyle, one with an ethic that transcends ordinary romance. Sneaky affairs are for straight people, but swingers can eat their wedding cake and have their fantasies too. Which explains why there have been no hookers hanging around *this* convention.

Life Among the Neo-Pagans

In the summer of 1997, I performed at the 17th annual Starwood Neo-Pagan Festival in Sherman, New York—Amish country on the border near Ohio and Pennsylvania. This event—a female-oriented celebration of the sensual and the spiritual—took place on private campgrounds, where clothing was optional. Many women were bare-breasted, and several men and women walked around fully naked, a practice known as the “sky clad” experience.

Instead of camping out, I stayed at a nearby bed-and-breakfast place. Downstairs in the living room, I asked a woman—falsely assuming that she was the proprietor—where the key would be left if I came back late at night.

“I don’t know,” she replied. “I’m here for the festival.”

“Oh. In what capacity?”

“I’m in the craft.”

“Which craft?”

“That’s right,” she said.

She has been a Wiccan for twenty years, but now she complained, "Witchcraft has become trendy. I mean, ever since *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* . . ."

At the festival, on Merchants Row, there was an inviting banner over one of the booths: "Stop by for a Spell." A positive perspective on witchcraft was a theme at this event, along with such workshops as "Privacy Rights and Drug Policy," "Cultivating Consciousness in Your Child," "Live Meditations in Drumming and Dance," "The Supreme Court and the Free Exercise of Religion, "A Procession to Honor the Earth Goddess," "Safer Sex" and "Dark Ecstasy: The Ritual Use of Pleasure, Pain and Sensory Deprivation as Psychedelic Experience."

When I walked on to the outdoor stage, my opening line was "I' m gonna start with two words that have been *thought* year after year at these festivals, but which have never actually been uttered out loud, and those two wards are: "Nice tits." The audience hesitated a second, because in that context this could be a politically incorrect observation—I had deliberately taken that chance—but then they laughed and applauded, because they knew it was true.

I was invited back to perform at Starwood again in the summer of 1998. The previous month, two Amish men had been arrested for distributing cocaine they bought from a biker gang, the Pagans, one of whose members was a police informer. The two men were from a particularly conservative Amish sect, where not only electricity and tractors were forbidden, but even zippers. Did the sight of those Amish-tempting zippers on the Pagans’ leather motorcycle jackets serve as a gateway drug to cocaine?

Speaking of illegal drugs, at the festival I came across the only individual I’ve ever met who had actually hallucinated on toad slime. I pictured him as a young lad with a tadpole in his pocket, and now as a grown man with a frog in his pocket.

I also met Reverend Ivan Stang, leader of the infamous Church of the SubGenius. He talked about “how to milk the Internet for all it’s worth, and get away with murder, before the Conspiracy figures out how to spoil it for us.” But Stang was in deep embarrassment mode, since this was only a couple of weeks after the failure of his widely circulated prediction that, on July 5th at 7 a.m., Pleasure Saucers would descend to Earth as part of the great “Rupture” and take away all those SubGeniuses who had paid $30 for the privilege.

The festival climaxed with its traditional 50-foot-diameter, 25-foot-high bonfire, constructed during the week with the aid of a derrick. On

Saturday night, several dancers with torches ritualistically teased this pyramid of logs, encircled at a distance by two thousand enthusiasts, although one impatient woman yelled, “Just *do* it!” The neo-pagans danced and pranced and cavorted around the bonfire late into the night.

My own personal highlight occurred when a beautiful woman named Pearl approached me. She was in the process of transforming her breasts from fetish to functional by nursing a baby that had been conceived there the year before. During that festival, she had walked in on my performance, bare-breasted, at the precise moment that I uttered the words, “Nice tits.” She assumed that I was referring specifically to her and, I had learned, she was flattered, so now I didn’t have the heart to disillusion her. But I did write about it in my *High Times* column, “Brain Damage Control,” ending with this sentence: “I hope she doesn’t read this.”

Furthermore, at the 20th annual Starwood Festival in 2000, I found myself in front of a microphone on that same stage, and I told that story. Pearl was in the audience, and she was laughing heartily. This time, though, when I said, “Nice tits,” I added, “Okay, now *everybody*,” and the words came booming back at me: ‘*NICE TITS!*’ ” Later, as I was leaving the stage, Pearl called out, “*Nice dick!”* I was fully dressed, but it didn’t matter. This was a perfect example of tit for tat. Or dick for tit.

My old friend Steve Gaskin and I were staying at a bed-and-breakfast house where there were angels all over the place. Stuffed angels, plastic angels, plaster-of-paris angels, embroidered angels, stained-glass angels, *papier-mache’* angels, teddy-bear angels and origami angels. There were angel dolls and angel paintings and angel sculptures and even an angel mobile hanging from the ceiling. In the bathroom, there was an angel tissue-dispenser and an angel night-light. On a table in the hallway, there was a pile of *Angels on Earth* magazine. On the bureau in my room, there was a copy of *Whispers From Heaven*, featuring such articles as “Feeding Angels,” “When Angels Kiss” and “Rescued by Angels: The Amazing Story of a Kidnapping Survivor.”

Gaskin’s room had a door that led to the roof, and the first night we sat out there and smoked a joint. The next day there was a note taped to the door: “The roof is to be used only as a fire escape. Please use the patio.” The next night we smoked a joint in my room. And the next day there was a “No Smoking” sign on the inside of my door, and the electric fan was on, aimed toward the now-open window.

At breakfast the next morning, I was just about to apologize to the kindly Christian woman whose home this was, explaining that a doctor had recommended marijuana for my arthritis, but *she* apologized to *me* because she hadn’t told me in advance that smoking wasn’t allowed. “Some people are allergic to cigarette smoke,” she explained, and I almost blurted out, “That wasn’t tobacco, that was pot.”

I hope she doesn’t read this.

Murder At the Conspiracy Convention

“The history of civilization is the history of warfare
between secret societies.” --Ishmael Reed

In the men’ s room at the airport, a man standing at the urinal a couple of urinals away from my urinal was urinating without aiming his penis. Both hands were flossing his teeth. A monument to multi-tasking. I’ ll admit that I occasionally brush my teeth while I’ m urinating—at least that leaves me with one hand free to steer—but this guy could possibly be the only human being on earth who pisses and flosses simultaneously.

He must have practiced at home before he decided to go public. And of course he was proud of his manual dexterity. Maybe he even has a license plate that says PFLOSS, though other drivers might assume it’ s his name, not his avocation. In any case, that image immediately replaced my previous visual mantra: seeing one of the kids on a school bus holding up to the window a sign that read HELP US!--and laughing with his classmates.

Now, on Memorial Day weekend, I was catching a flight to San Jose, California. I was headed for Conspiracy Con 2001, a convention featuring the prophets of the sinister.

My friend Roy Zimmerman, who writes and sings satirical folk songs in the tradition of Tom Lehrer, has a spoken piece of patter which goes: "I just got back from the conspiracy convention. Have you been? It's fun. Seven hundred conspiracy theorists all in one hotel, with the little name tags, 'Hello, my name is—none of your fucking business!' Great seminars— 'Triangulation and You, 'Paranoia for Profit,' 'Victoria's Real Secret Was J. Edgar Hoover.' In the lobby, I saw five people get off the elevator—what, you think that's a coincidence? There was entertainment, of course—a group of horny anti-government folk singers called the Randy Weavers."

Zimmerman was surprised to learn that there would actually be an event such as the one that he thought he was making up. Although the real conspiracy convention didn't have the seven hundred attendees he had imagined, there were over 500, including 40% from out of state and 10% from other countries, including Canada, England, Australia, Denmark, Austria and Ireland. Also taking place at the Santa Clara Convention Center that same weekend as Conspiracy Con was the Charismatic Catholic Convention. Dueling religions, together again.

* * *

The leadoff speaker at Conspiracy Con was Cathy O’Brien, who claimed to be a victim of the CIA’s MK-Ultra child-sex-slave program, Project Monarch. She was introduced by her husband, Mark Phillips, as “the love of my life.” Phillips claims that, having worked for the CIA, where he learned hypnosis, and for a Department of Defense subcontractor with exposure to mind-control research, he was able to rescue O’Brien, deprogram her and collaborate on their book, *Trance Formation of America*.

“There is not one person in this audience,” he exhorts, “that could not be legally experimented on, killed or financially destroyed.”

He has the bearing, the cadence and the pompadour of a dramatically pious televangelist. He oozes with practiced integrity. In contrast, Cathy O’Brien has the demeanor of a guileless, bleached-blond checkout cashier in a small-town supermarket who sends money every week to her favorite televangelist. She speaks with a certain tremor in her voice.

“Mind control,” she warns, “is the most important issue facing humanity today.”

She reveals her relationship with Gerald Ford, who was “very much interested in mind control, so the local Michigan Mafia child pornography ring was actually sanctioned, and they could target children like myself who were so horribly abused that they would be used in child pornography. When my father was caught sending this pornography through the mail, Gerald Ford approached and told him that he could receive immunity from prosecution if he would sell me into the project. My father eagerly agreed. He was so happy that the government actually condoned child abuse that he went on to have five more children to raise for the project, so there were seven of us in all. He was never prosecuted and remains free for reasons of national security.”

At the age of 13, she met the man “who would become my owner” —Senator Robert Byrd. In *Trance Formation*, she describes their first meeting:

“I undressed and climbed into his bed as ordered. I was momentarily relieved to find that his penis was abnormally tiny—so small it didn’t even hurt! And I could breathe with it in my mouth! Then he began to indulge himself in his brutal perversions, talking on and on about how I was ‘made just for him’ due to the vast amounts of pain I could withstand. The spankings and police handcuffs I had previously endured were child’s play compared to Senator Byrd’s near-death tortures. The hundreds of scars on my body still show today.

"I was one of the only kids in my school who listened to country music. But then, Senator Byrd fancied himself a country music fiddler, and it was 'my duty to love what he did.' I was ordered to listen to country music or no music at all. Music was my psychological avenue for escape, a dissociative tool. CIA operator Merle Haggard, who often used well-documented cryptic language in his songs pertaining to government mind-control slave operations, released songs including 'Freedom Train' and 'Over the Rainbow.'

"My father told me repeatedly that Merle Haggard was my 'favorite' singer, and his songs reinforced my programming. Of course, Senator Byrd remained my 'favorite' fiddler' as ordered. He played train songs like 'Orange Blossom Special' while making train sounds on his fiddle. Sometimes I was his captive audience, bound and gagged, while he played his fiddle. Other times he instructed me to spin round and round like a music box dancer in order to add 'new dimensions to our sex.' These new dimensions included more and more physical pain through 'kinky' torture."

It was Senator Byrd who directed her father to send her to Catholic school, and it was Gerald Ford who became "my first president." That night, she recalls, "I wore my Catholic uniform as instructed and went into a dissociative trance as my father drove me to the local National Guard Armory, where I was prostituted to Ford. He took me into an empty room, pushed me down on the wooden floor as he unzipped his pants and said, ‘Pray on this.’ Then he brutally, sexually assaulted me. Afterward, my memory was compartmentalized through use of high voltage. I was then carried out to the car where I lay in the back seat, muscles contracted, stunned, in pain, and unable to move.”

And then there was Dick Cheney, President Ford’s chief of staff. After Cathy was hunted down and caught in Cheney’s game of “human hunting,” she stood naked in his hunting-lodge office as he paced around and gave her this choice: “I could stuff you and mount you like a jackalope and call you a two-legged deer. Or I could stuff you with this--he unzipped his pants to reveal his oversized penis--right down your throat and then mount you. Which do you prefer?”

Apparently, Cheney’s oversized penis balanced out Senator Byrd’s tiny penis--a tawdry version of Emerson’s Law of Compensation.

Cathy specialized in political figures (although she was also thrust upon by country singers such as “CIA operatives” Merle Haggard and Kris Kristofferson). With unintentional prophetic irony, Cathy described her 1983 meeting with Ronald Reagan, George Bush and Dick Cheney:

"Reagan gestured toward Bush and said, 'This is my vice president. People don' t usually know what the role of the vice president is because he' s always behind the scenes making sure everything that the president wants done happens the way it' s supposed to.' He looked at me and said matter-of-factly, 'I catch the public' s attention while the vice president carries out orders.' 'And *gives* them,' added Bush' s close friend, Dick Cheney.

"George Bush, Jr. stood by his father and covered his backside whenever Bush would become incapacitated from drugs or required criminal backup. It appeared that Junior was there to serve both purposes while his father and Cheney enjoyed their work-vacation. Junior had never shown any interest in me sexually. Like his father, he had only shown sexual interest in [my daughter] Kelly, who had been away with him most of the day."

Cathy told the Conspiracy Con audience that, at the age of 19, "I worked on a White House/Pentagon level during the Reagan/Bush years and carried out many criminal covert operations for the CIA. The war on drugs was no more than the CIA eliminating competition worldwide, turning our streets into a bloodbath. I was exposed to many drugs, perversion, sex activity, filmed through a little lens in the ceiling because these criminals do not trust each other, so they blackmail each other. I used cocaine, sometimes heroin, Bush’ s drug of choice.

“Of all the drugs I was exposed to there was one that was strictly forbidden, and that was marijuana, because the effects on the brain actually opened those neuron pathways so that any compartmentalization of memory, of any kind of trauma, or so-called secret, actually begins to erode. That’ s why they don’ t want to have even medical marijuana. I’ m not standing here to be pro-marijuana at all, I am here to tell you I am extremely *anti*-marijuana, but I know why this anti-marijuana campaign is out there, with their efforts to control all of us by making sure that this particular drug is controlled so that no one in any kind of position would have free thought.”

When Cathy finished her presentation, Mark Phillips returned to the stage. “We ask you respectfully,” he said, “to please allow us to provide you with” —that is, to sell— “our book and share it with someone you love. It’ s a horrible book, probably the most incredible validated story that is going to soon be a major theme in maybe more than one motion picture and a TV documentary series. After all these years, Cathy and I believe that this is our last year.”

And therein lies a paradox of this convention. All the speakers totally distrust the controlled mainstream media, yet they all sense imminent triumph, believing that they and their messages will soon be vindicated by that very same controlled mainstream media.

You want statistics? Here’ s what the polls show: That 68% of Americans believe President Kennedy was killed as part of a conspiracy. That 51% believe federal officials assassinated JFK. That 40% of Americans think the FBI set the fires at Waco. That more than four in ten Americans think the FBI deliberately withheld evidence in the Oklahoma City bombing case. That 80% of Americans think the government is concealing knowledge of extraterrestrial life. That 75% of Americans believe the war on drugs is a failure. That 47% of people using public toilets flush with their feet.

* * *

In a book about the National Security Agency, *Body of Secrets*, James Bamford reveals that, in 1962, U.S. military leaders proposed a plan to commit violent terrorist acts and kill innocent Americans, blaming Cuba in order to create a pretext for invading the island and deposing Fidel Castro. One document prepared and signed by all five Joint Chiefs or Staff, states: “We could develop a Communist Cuban terror campaign in the

Miami area, in other Florida cities and even in Washington. We could blow up a U.S. ship in Guantanamo Bay and blame Cuba. Casualty lists in U.S. newspapers would cause a helpful wave of indignation."

In an interview, Bamford said, "What the Joint Chiefs indicated in their plan was, they would have people shot on American streets, bombs blown up, refugee boats sunk on the high seas—and all this would be blamed on the Cuban government."

I have no problem believing such insidious intentions—certainly the U.S. military commanders were *capable* of such dehumanization—and yet I can't accept as truth Cathy O'Brien's story. I think it's an elaborate hoax, intertwining celebrity porn with historical context to foster credibility. Example: "Noriega had been an intricate part of arming the Nicaraguan *contras* for Reagan, as well as an international hub in the cocaine operations that funded the black budgets for ultra-secret projects such as Project Monarch.

"Michael Aquino put a vaginal prod in my hand and ordered me to masturbate myself with it, pushing the button to electrically jolt myself internally upon command. Noriega's eyes were enormous. He paled to a sickly grey, his mouth fell open and he ran out the door while Aquino assured him that he had ‘nowhere to run, nowhere to hide from Reagan’s powers.’”

So who *is* this Aquino guy? According to Cathy, “In the early 1980s, my base programming was instilled at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, by U.S. Army Lt. Colonel Michael Aquino. He holds a Top Secret clearance in the Defense Intelligence Agency’s Psychological Warfare Division (PSYOP). He is a professed neo-Nazi, the founder of the Himmler-inspired satanic Temple of Set and has been charged with child ritual and sexual abuse at the Presidio Day Care in San Francisco. But like my father, Aquino remains ‘above the law’ while he continues to traumatize and program CIA-destined young minds in a quest to reportedly create the ‘superior race’ of Project Monarch mind-controlled slaves.”

I contacted Aquino, who retired in 1994, and he responded:

“Not only was I never stationed at Fort Campbell at anytime throughout my entire Army career, but I’ve never even visited that particular post, on- or off-duty. I have never had any contact at anytime, anyplace, anywhere with Cathy O’Brien. I have never programmed sex slaves for the government or anyone else. I have never participated in any form of child abuse whatever.”

What does he think her motivation is?

"I can only assume that O' Brien is either a crank or simply an unethical individual who seeks money, notoriety and/or publicity by inventing sensationalistic lies. Her book is strewn with sex accusations not just about myself, but concerning a parade of high government officials, celebrities and country music stars. I haven' t sued O' Brien for libel for the simple reason that her book is clearly in the lunatic fringe, and to take legal notice of it would only give it a dignity it doesn' t deserve. I presume that the other public figures libeled by it haven' t sued her either for the same reason.

"I certainly am not going to defend/excuse any of the MK-Ultra projects. These were all before my time—I was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in 1968—and I read about such things in *Search for the Manchurian Candidate* and *Acid Dreams*, shaking my head, much the same as you probably did. I *can* affirm that my work in Army PSYOP was strictly legitimate and in keeping with the Field Manual #33-1 guidelines taught at the Special Warfare Center, Fort Bragg.

"In a nutshell: techniques for trying to convince an enemy not to fight but to cooperate with you. I originally became interested in it because (a) I believed that the USA was generally on the side of goodness, and (b) winning wars by persuasion rather than bullets and bombs seemed a great idea to me. This may sound like a naïve idealist, but that’ s the way I looked out at the world in 1968.”

I asked Aquino, “Do you think that Cathy O’ Brien and Mark Phillips utilized you in their book [published in 1995] because the Presidio case would give their accusations a patina of verisimilitude?”

“Well, I think that’ s obvious,” he replied. “After the highly publicized and sensationalized attack on my wife and myself at the Presidio, all sorts of nutcases tossed my name around in whatever their fantasy of the moment. The combination--high-ranking Army officer, intelligence officer, Special Forces officer, PSYSOP officer, #2 official of the Church of Satan 1970-75+--was just too juicy.

“As for the Presidio affair, following the publication of the ‘recovered memories of Satanic Ritual Abuse’ book *Michelle Remembers* in 1980, the United States and other Anglo-American countries went through a decade of ‘Satanic Ritual Abuse scares and witch-hunts. After the 1984 McMartin Preschool became internationally publicized in one such scare, day-care facilities generally became targets of ‘Satanic Ritual Abuse’ witch-hunts.

“The epidemic extended to U.S. military services as well, including fifteen U.S. Army day-care centers and elementary schools by 1987. In late

1986 it was the turn of the Presidio. The San Francisco Police investigated, verified that my wife and I had been three thousand miles away in Washington, D.C.—where I was on duty every single day [that the alleged victim] was at the day-care center September 1st to October 31st, 1986—and closed the case with no charges accordingly.

"In October 1988, however, I appeared as a panelist on a *Geraldo Rivera Halloween Special*. Rivera was trying to aggravate and escalate the 'Satanic Ritual Abuse' witch-hunt mania, and I was speaking out against it. The broadcast came to the attention of Senator Jesse Helms who became enraged that a Lt. Colonel in the Army should dare to hold a 'Satanic' religion. As Freedom of information filings later revealed, Helms then secretly contacted his close personal friend, Secretary of the Army John Marsh, and insisted that Marsh devise some way to destroy my career.

"What was actually taking place: a blatant attempt by Senator Helms, Secretary of the Army Marsh and the Criminal Investigation Division of the Army to discredit an Army officer with a 'politically incorrect' religion. It didn't work."

* * *

Although I believe that *Trance Formation of America* is an elaborate hoax and Michael Aquino thinks it' s in the lunatic fringe, conspiracy researcher Robert Sterling perceives a more devious motivation. In *Apocalypse Culture II*, edited by Adam Parfrey, Sterling writes:

"Effective disinformation is never an absolute lie. The purpose of disinformation is to confuse truth and validity, and to do so, boldfaced les are rarely convincing. Effective disinformation mixes truth and deception to obfuscate the two. The closer the disinformation approaches truth, the more damning it becomes. Then all the disinformation, even the legitimate parts, discredits targeted research and ideas.

"At the time of the release of *Trance Formation*, there was a growing awareness in the conspiracy subculture of intelligence agency involvement in satanic ritual abuse. Literature on the subject was reaching a critical mass where it could not be ignored. Would intelligence agencies devote resources to counteract such information? Not only is it possible, it almost certainly has occurred.

"The CIA, even with an officially acknowledged history of abusing people through mind-control experiments (the most famous being MK-Ultra), certainly has a vested interest in denying such operations exist, especially when the operations are as insidious as sexually abusing children. And supposing that [the] tales are part of a CIA disinformation campaign, it would make sense that some names on the list would actually include guilty participants. After all, what better place to hide the truth than out in the open, knowing full well it won’t be believed?”

Sterling posted a review of Cathy O’Brien’s book by Jaye Beldo on his Web site, *The Konformist*:

“If you are bored out of your mind with the usual Pamela Anderson Lee ‘power-fuck porn,’ I suggest grabbing a copy of *Trance Formation of America* and heading to the nearest bathroom with a jar of Vaseline. Why not infuse life into your worn-out sexual fantasies by envisioning some of the scenes spelled out in Cathy O’Brien’s supposed expose’ of the pedophile shenanigans of our Government officials? I mean, how could you not get excited over picturing Hillary Clinton going down on the author’s deformed vagina like a starved wolf while Bill walks in on them and casually ignores them?

“I cannot help but get the impression that Cathy is, at times, really no different from some of the questionable UFO abductees making extravagant claims of being transported to other solar systems and back again. I have little doubt that some of the horrible things she mentions actually happen on a day-to-day basis. Completely denying them would be folly."

Mark Phillips was not too thrilled with this review, and he wrote to Beldo:

"I feel compelled to inform you of the inevitable consequences of your unsolicited written vulgar assaults upon Cathy O' Brien, Kelly, myself and the overall integrity of our book. I have placed you on the shortlist of potentially dangerous sexual predators, which is automatically reviewed by interested local law enforcement personal [*sic*] (that we are in regular professional communications with) whenever a sexual crime is committed in the area you reside. Until you are apprehended for being a physical threat to yourself and/or innocent others, you will remain at large but nevertheless well identified.

"Stay away from contact with children and out of any county/state/federal prison system, as within moments from the time you may eventually be arrested for some alledged [*sic*] charge of illegal/immoral activities, I will be notified and will do all in my power of influence to see that you are legally seperated [*sic*] from society until you have had to time necessary to do what you proposed for others less appreciative of your sick 'review'—to get a hold of yourself or allow an inmate to take matters into their own hands and change your thoughts towards acceptance of brutal criminal activity."

Konformist editor Sterling wrote to Phillips:

"I harbored no personal animosity to either you or Ms. O' Brien, but I had serious questions about the accuracy of what was in your book. Even more disturbing, I had a very bad feeling that, wittingly or not, the claims in *Trance Formation* could easily be used to manipulate people into a hysterical witch-hunt state, and could be used to smear those who are innocent of charges made by you and Cathy, Brice and others. I felt if people were not careful, they could be whipped into a fascist state of mindlessly agreeing to any charge made by alleged CIA sex slaves to a conspiracy underground version of McCarthyism."

The "Brice" he refers to is Brice Taylor, author of the first competitor of *Trance Formation*, published in 1999—*Thanks for the Memories: The Memoirs of Bob Hope' s and Henry Kissinger' s Mind-Controlled Slave*—in which she asserts that Walt Disney raped her on Mr. Toad' s Wild Ride; that she had sex with all three Kennedy brothers plus JFK, Jr. when he was 12; and that she has cavorted with public figures ranging from Prince Charles to Alan Greenspan, from Elvis Presley to Neil Diamond, from Johnny Carson to Ed McMahon. "Hi-yo!"

Brice Taylor also claims the existence of a federal program of brainwashing and molesting children with electroshock and dolphins, that she and her 13-year-old daughter had a threesome with Sylvester Stallone, and that he filmed them in *Dolphin Porn*, videos of dolphins penetrating women in the ocean. And Cathy O' Brien declares that "Jesuit/NASA-based whale and dolphin programming suggests that water is a mirror to other dimensions and is the means by which aliens have mixed with our population."

Robert Sterling observes that, "After suffering horrible torture and abuse at the hands of countless famous politicians and celebrities, both O' Brien and Taylor declare of being spoken to by Jesus Christ, whose glorious powers healed them of all trauma and left them immune to further manipulation. At the time of her 'memory recovery,' Brice was corralled and influenced by Christian fundamentalists, who convinced her that her previous life was the prelude for an afterlife in Hell. It should be obvious that the New World Order sex slave genre is nothing more than thinly veiled porn disguised as parapolitics."

Sterling told me that Cathy and Mark' s book has "sold over 20,000 copies. Their following is heavily right-wing Christians and patriot groups, and if you hang out with either sector you' ll eventually hear some pro-*Trance-Formation-of-America* sentiments. Not surprising—part of the book’ s thesis is that mind control is part of the New World Order plot.”

The predecessor of this whole non-literary genre was *The Control of Candy Jones*, published in 1976. Jones was a highly successful model supposedly transformed into a CIA Manchurian Candidate. The book was ghostwritten by her husband, a carnival hypnotist and late-night radio talk-show host “Long John” Nebel. His friend, stage magician and psychic debunker James “The Amazing” Randi, told me that Nebel made up the entire book because he needed money. When I mentioned this to Walter Bowart, author of *Operation Mind Control*, he insisted that Randi himself was an intelligence agent. Amazing, indeed.

* * *

There’ s a mini-ballroom at the Convention Center where conspiracy books, audio and videotapes are being sold. A man wearing a space suit is hawking an Alien Abduction Survival Kit. Another vendor is selling aura cameras. And, for some incongruous reason, a woman is coning—that is, getting the wax out of a prone client’ s ears with the aid of a burning candle and a tin pie-pate. At a booth offering “Free

Electricity for Life," the proprietor is saying, "They killed one of my associates."

In the auditorium, William Lyne, a researcher on free energy devices for 50 years, tells the audience, "I know a man who's in mind control—and they've used it on him and his father—they use a virtual reality type of technology that's projected to that person, transmitted to them so that they see images that aren't there, but what they want to do is terrify them and make them *think* they're seeing these things, except they're intelligent people and they know that they're not real images, they just want to know how they're *receiving* those images. If they want you to see something, they can transmit it to you.

"They can do it for a whole area. And the place where this person lives, they're all shutting down at 10 o'clock at night. Everybody in that whole part of town are actually going to bed at the same time. It's like they've got the whole area under control. And it's within eyeshot of Los Alamos Labs. The dirty part of the labs where they do this kind of stuff. I say dirty because there's coerced black projects being done out of there."

As for Lyne's own safety in the face of promulgating free energy, he says, "I'm encouraged lately because there's safety in numbers. Too many people have access to this stuff and are promoting it. Now there have been some real tragedies in the past. People had some of this technology and they disappeared or were squashed. I don’t have any fear of the government. I lost my fear a long time ago. They tried to murder me several times, and I said to myself, ‘Well, I might be dead tomorrow and nobody’d know why, so I’m gonna go out there and tell what I know and I’m not afraid,’ and I think everyone should take the same approach.”

Jordan Maxwell has been exploring the hidden foundations of religions and secret societies since 1959. At the convention, his presentation is titled *Toxic Religion and the Occult Establishment*. “The same people who gave you the Mafia gave you the Church,” he says.

“The Church *is* the Mafia. An FBI man called me: ‘We’ve been watching you, we follow you wherever you go, we know what you’re doing. But you are not a threat. We admire what you’re trying to do. But your government does not consider you to be a threat—yet—but if you get enough people listening to you—and they’re not just listening but they’re actually *hearing* you—then you will be considered a threat and now we’ll have to take another look at what you’re going to do.

“ ‘But the reason I’ m calling—this an unofficial call—is to warn you when you talk about corruption and government, most people in government couldn’ t care less, they don’ t care, they’ re corrupt and they know it and you know it, so what are you gonna do about it? But when you talk about the Church and religious institutions in this country, what you’ re doing is you are messing with organized crime at its highest level. The highest levels of organized crime in this country are the religious institutions. We’ re talking about a lot of money. We’ re talking about the control of men’ s minds, about the dream of absolute total domination. This makes the Mafia look like child’ s play.’ ”

Another speaker, Len Horowitz, author of *Emerging Viruses: AIDS and Ebola*, explains that “Non-lethal warfare is where you don’ t kill populations like with a bomb or a gunshot, but you make them sick. You make them dependent on pharmaceuticals which are actually a military-pharmaceutical complex run by the same players—the global elite—and then ultimately these populations become enslaved to the pharmaceuticals and economically debilitated along with their nation states.”

Now, like the Blues Brothers, he on a mission from God: “Bust the Illuminati. Bust the cryptography code. The darkest time in our history is just beginning. Revelation tells you in God’ s word that you and I should count the number of the Beast 666. The revelations we’ve just been given is that wisdom. It takes it out of the realm of foolish conspiracy theory into hard, provable, scientific, statistically significant fact, and God bless you with it at this time. With that blessing, I want to thank you so much for allowing me to be here tonight [it was now 12:30 in the afternoon]. Thank you. God bless you. Thank you [said nine times]. Say hallelujah! Praise God! Thank you all.”

Dr. Horowitz was scheduled to fly to Africa and spread the word. “Okay, God,” he prayed aloud, “if it’s not Your will for me to go—because apparently I’m hearing from all these people that I shouldn’t go, I shouldn’t go, fear, fear, fear, fear—please let me know what You want me to do, and if You have me go, if You choose to have me die if I go, then so be it, but I would prefer to live and carry your work forward, so please direct me.” And of course God told him to go.

Yet another presenter, William Thomas, author of *Chem-Trails: Mystery Lines in the Sky,* also revealed a sense of his own martyrdom. He stated that “The earth and its inhabitants are being subjected to unprecedented experimentation without our knowledge or permission. Some say the chem-trails are intended to kill us all. Others insist the disorientation and lethargy resulting from chem-trail exposure are intended to make citizens compliant to the New World Order and enslave us all.

"The most plausible explanation for massive aerial spraying is a planet-wide, high-tech campaign against catastrophic climate change. If true, such a desperate Band-Aid solution disregards fundamental causes of global warming in order to protect powerful financial interests by permitting pollution and profits. This story has cost me a lot--cost me the love of my life, my career. To the people doing this, you can break my heart and you can break my back, but you will never, ever, break my spirit." [Prolonged applause, shouts of *Bravo*] "I' m not afraid of death."

And the P.A. system blared forth the sound of Jackson Browne singing, "There are lives in the balance . . ."

* * *

If there is a star of this show, it' s David Icke (rhymes with bike). Author of *And the Truth Shall Set You Free*, he' s a dynamic performer, somewhat pot-bellied, with longish yellow hair. His presentation is about the secret manipulation of the human race, going back thousands of years, revealing how the same interbreeding bloodlines continue to control positions of power today, and he ardently shares suppressed information on humanity’s ancient extraterrestrial origins. Thus he offers an alternative explanation of our existence that transcends creationism and evolution alike.

All that, and he puts his underwear on backwards too. With his whimsical British accent, he confides to the audience: “A little while ago, I’m thinking I’ll empty me bladder before I speak, so I’m fiddling and I can’t make contact, and then I realize I put me underpants on the wrong way around. I didn’t know whether I was coming or going.” Then he entered specific domains of strangeness:

“A few years ago, I met a scientist who joined the CIA as a youngster, serving his country. He is a genius in the area of magnetics. When he started to work for the CIA in these secret projects, he realized that they didn’t want his knowledge to serve humanity, they wanted to create technology that would help to control the mass of the population, and he rebelled against it and said, ‘I’m not doing this any more.’

“He started to tell me a story and, as he did, he was opening his shirt. One day he left home and he started missing time. Doesn’t remember anything about it. But he does remember waking up on a medical-type bench, and as he got his faculties back he realized there was something stuck to his chest. As he opened his shirt, I could see like a see-through shampoo sachet on his chest with an orange-gold liquid inside it.

"And he said that what they' d done was manipulate his body to need this drug to survive, and if he doesn' t get it, then he starts to die what is apparently a very long and painful death. And this patch--which is what they call them on the inside--with the drug has to be replaced every seventy-two hours, and if he doesn' t serve an agenda that sickens him, then it' s not replaced.

"He told me about a microchip now so small it can be inserted in a vaccination program through a hypodermic needle. Even those who thought the microchip was coming along as a tagging device have not realized that it' s not just about keeping a tag on where people are. It' s not actually the signals going from the chip to the computer we should be concerned about, but the signals coming the other way *to* the chip, because the technology exists, outside the public arena and increasingly in it, which can manipulate human emotion and thought processes externally once one of these guys is inside. If people say no to one thing, say no to the microchip."

(In December 2001, Reuters would report that a chip the size of a grain of rice which can be injected into your body and give detailed information to anyone with the right scanning equipment is soon to be available from Applied Digital Solutions. The company has projected a potential market worth $70 billion.]

Occasionally, Icke throws in a tidbit of comic relief, such as two Martians in a bar: “Have you heard the latest about the Earthlings?” “No, what have they done now?” “They borrow money that doesn’t exist and pay interest on it.”

Other times, he’ll throw in a generally unconsidered theory: “JonBenet Ramsey has all the feel of her being a multi-personality, dissociative identity disorder, trauma-based mind-control situation, and involved in satanic ritual abuse. I think there’s a massive cover-up there, because if you’re going to stop the dominoes falling, you have to stop the first domino falling, and that’s what that cover-up to me was all about.”

But he is most challenging when he discusses interbreeding: “Why are three ruling families today obsessed with interbreeding? Why when you follow them back genealogically to the ancient world have they always been obsessed with interbreeding? I found an amazing common theme in the ancient world anywhere on the planet—the theme of gods interbreeding with humanity, creating hybrid bloodlines which ended up in positions of power.

“I talked five hours with a Zulu shaman about extraterrestrial connections to the Illuminati. African history is the same theme, of gods from another world, which have great connections to earth history, interbreeding with humanity, creating bloodlines which have ruled the world all these thousands of years. The royal black bloodline of Africa from the age of tribal days claimed descendants from the same gods that these other crowds do.

“One of the great themes that comes up in this interbreeding and these ancient accounts is of a serpent race, a race of a reptilian genetic history, which interbred with humans, creating hybrid DNA. I’m not just talking about this tiny frequency range we call the world. There are other frequencies as well, in terms of where manipulators of the manipulators actually come from. This force which manipulates through these bloodlines overwhelmingly operates right on the periphery of our physical senses, right on the edge. It can appear that someone’s gone from one form to another. This is ‘shape shifting’ between human and reptilian form.

“From 1998 onward, I kept meeting people telling the same story, that they have seen people overwhelmingly in positions of power--but not always--move from a human form to a reptilian-type form. There is the Mayan legend of the iguana. Lizard-like aliens had descended upon the Mayans. Their pyramids—their advanced astronomical technology including the sacrifice of virgins—were supposedly inspired by lizard aliens. When the aliens interbred with the Mayans, they produced a form of life they could inhabit. They fluctuated between a human and iguana appearance in chameleon-like abilities, a perfect vehicle for transforming into world leaders.

"Those who have seen a reptilian-type ethereal figure enveloping and following around humans and locking into them in those lower two chakra points, vortex points, for me, is possession. The more I've understood this, the more I've realized just how many people, particularly these bloodlines, are actually controlled by these other-dimensional forces, and while we appear to be seeing a president or a banking leader in a physical form, the actual point of control is beyond that and overshadowing it, and on some occasion people see that overshadowing entity."

One wonders whether such a defense— "The reptile made me do it!" —will some day be used in a court of law.

"To understand humanity," Icke continued, "you have really got to understand humanists reptilian past, reptilian inherited genetics. One of the most ancient parts of the human brain is known by science as the R complex, for reptilian brain. We get these traits—cold-blooded behavior, ritualistic behavior, desire for top-down power over structures. Now, dismiss the reptilian thing—let's just think they don't exist—I have just described the basic mentality of the Illuminati that allows wars to be created, millions of casualties without any emotional attachment to consequences. Why do people who have more money than they could spend in a thousand lifetimes go on accumulating it? Why do corporations that have *enormous* power and control over vast areas go on accumulating and seeking more and more power and control?"

So, then, is this whole reptilian agenda really just a metaphor for the varieties of human cruelty? Or does Icke mean it all literally?

Previously, Jordan Maxwell had told the audience, "I think the dirtiest, the filthiest, the most licentious people on the face of the earth are the British royalty. They represent in the human race all that is evil and all that is filthy and degenerate. And that's why Princess Diana is dead." That there was a conspiracy behind Diana's death seems to be a given among this crowd: the royal bloodline protected by the paparazzi.

Conspiracy researchers often start with a premise—who benefits?—and work their way backward, molding their perception of reality like Silly Putty in order to *culminate* with the justification of that premise.

Maxwell continued: "About ten years ago, a young black man broke into the Queen Mum's bedroom, and one of her servants happened to be walking by and the bedroom door was open a bit, and she saw this young black boy in the queen's bedroom. She quietly went to security which came up and arrested him for breaking into the queen's bedroom, but the queen said he didn't threaten her and he wasn't armed and it was just a childish silly prank, and so she let it slide if he promised not to do that any more. James Bond couldn't break into the queen's bedroom! If there was a young black man in the queen's bedroom in Buckingham Palace, the queen ordered him in like pizza. The Queen Mum with her black boyfriend. Tell me about racism."

That anecdote says something about the queen's human nature, but now David Icke added another dimension:

"Some of the descriptions, like of the British royal family—people who claim to have been at the rituals—are of a *literal* shift. They seem to go from one physical state to another, very much in this dimension, which from our perspective of this-world physics is like, *what?* And then others are describing what appears to be a vibrational thing, where people are looking into another dimension slightly outside of our physical frequency range, the normal one, and suddenly they’re seeing another level of the person which appears reptilian. And exactly where the truth is in all that or whether it’s a shade of grey and both are true, there’s a lot more information that is needed.

“Going back in African history, this reptilian group actually go back a phenomenal amount of time in relation to this planet, and they claim that it’s actually rightfully theirs, and at some point in the ancient past there were some great wars that went on, and in fact they were kicked off, and they’re trying to regain control of what they think is rightfully theirs, like being kicked out of a country.

“Other researchers, concentrating on the reptilian thing for a long time, say that in some way they basically go around to different places, just raping the resources, and then move on. Then there’s the one about the fact that in some way a lot of these beings were almost imprisoned, in a vibrational prison, like they can’t get out of it by going up because they can’t vibrationally get there in their present state of being. And their only way out of that level is to come into a lower level of vibration into this dense physical world, and operate through that. But I understand Cathy saying it’ s only a mind-control thing.”

From the gospel according to Cathy O’ Brien:

“When Bill and Bob Bennett together sexually assaulted my daughter Kelly and me at the Bohemian Grove in 1986, I had already known Bill Bennett as a mind control programmer for some time. He apparently found perverse pleasure in whipping me. With my wrists bruised and my body stinking with pain, Bennett lit up a cigarette and cryptically asked, ‘Was that your first cum-union with an alien?’

“[On another occasion] deep underground in NASA’ s Goddard Space Flight Center mind-control lab near D.C., Bill Bennett began preparing me for the program. NASA uses various CIA designer drugs to chemically alter the brain and create exactly the mindset required at the time. I could barely crawl up onto the cold, metal lab table as the drug took effect in the darkness surrounding me, I could hear Bill Bennett talking. ‘My brother Bob and I work as one unit. We are alien to this dimension—two beings from another plane.’

“The high-tech light display swirling around me convinced me I was transforming dimensions with them. A laser of light hit the black wall in front of me, which seemed to explode into a panoramic view of a White

House cocktail party—as though I had transformed dimensions and stood amongst them. Not recognizing anyone, I frantically asked, 'Who are these people?'

" 'They' re not people, and this isn' t a space ship,' Bennett said. As he spoke, the holographic scene changed ever so slightly until the people appeared to be lizard-like aliens. 'Welcome to the second level of the underground. This level is a mere reflection of the first, an alien dimension. We are from a trans-dimensional plane that spans and encompasses all dimensions. I have taken you through my dimension as a means of establishing stronger holds on your mind than the earth' s plane permits. Being alien, I simply make my thoughts your thoughts by projecting them into your mind. My thoughts are your thoughts.' If this were so, why did he have to *audibly* tell me?"

Aha! A touch of skepticism from Cathy. And yet part of me still hopes that was all true, if only because of Bill Bennett' s personal maxim: "Hypocrisy is better than having no values at all."

* * *

How could I distinguish truth from lies if truth was cross-fertilized with greed, the need for attention, false memory, speculation, fantasy, self-delusion and intentional propaganda? I contemplated the implications of something that Michael Aquino had told me:

"Part of what we learned in PSYOP was that it's not just the propaganda you create that is a factor, but the pre-existing propaganda 'filters' in target audiences' brains as well. The key has to be designed to fit the lock, so to speak. And underlying all this is the challenge to the PSYOPerator to extricate *himself* from his own filters--otherwise he will see the situation only through his personal distortions and thus be inept at influencing it objectively and comprehensively."

Consequently, propaganda can become a two-way street. For example, Cory Hammond, former president of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis, has had many clients who, under hypnosis, "remember" hideous incidents of satanic rituals, infant sacrifice, sadomasochism and coprophilia (get that shit-eating grin off your face). Dr. Hammond believes that three groups working together—neo-Nazis, the CIA and NASA—have been programming American children for over fifty years to make them part of "a Satanic order that will rule the world."

Likewise, the war on drugs is filtered through a *mass* of distortions. In the words of *The Economist*—a venerable British newsweekly that has been a longtime passionate advocate for the legalization of drugs—the growing, selling, consuming and outlawing of illegal drugs around the world is a complex mix of economics, politics and world culture.

There are silly conspiracies. Some folks believe that the moon landing was faked (those were close-up photos of oatmeal). Others believe that the Woodstock Festival never occurred (it was contrived by the media). Still others believe that Elvis Presley’ s death was fabricated (he’ s alive in Las Vegas, working as an Elvis impersonator). And surely there must be others who are convinced that militant vegetarian activists are responsible for Mad Cow disease.

Sometimes silly conspiracists get results. In 1995, Indiana transportation officials were forced to alter the maintenance codes marked on the back of highway signs because some state residents were convinced that the markings were coded messages designed to assist invading UN troops.

And there are serious conspiracies. Gasoline refiners conspire to limit supply and fix prices. The relationship between doctors and pharmaceutical companies is blatantly conspiratorial. Douglas Valentine wrote in *The Phoenix Program* (about the CIA’ s notorious terrorist campaign against Vietnamese villagers) that in 1968 the Army’ s 111th Military Intelligence Group kept Martin Luther King under 24-hours-a-day surveillance. Its agents were in Memphis on April 4th and “reportedly watched and took photos while King’s assassin moved into position, took aim, fired, and walked away.”

World War II was racketed by presidential conspiracies of silence: Franklin D. Roosevelt knew that Japan was going to attack Pearl Harbor; and Harry Truman knew that Japan was about to make peace overtures but he nevertheless ordered that atomic bombs be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Domestically, the Aryan Republican Army financed and helped to stage the Oklahoma City bombing, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms knew about it three weeks before it happened.

Pokeman has become a target of religious leaders throughout the Arab world who charge that the game promotes theories of evolution, encourages gambling and, at its core, is part of a Jewish conspiracy aimed at turning children away from Islam. To David Icke, Jews are the pawns in an elaborate Rothschild-Illuminati breeding experiment, and they are “impregnated with a reptilian genetic code.”

* * *

There’s a final panel at Conspiracy Con with questions from the audience. A reporter for *Stuff* magazine waits his turn on line, then steps up to the microphone and asks, “What is the secret to how you’ve managed to maintain such healthy heads of hair? The answers: “Well, mine’s glued.” “I stopped pulling it out a few years ago.” “It was the fluoride.” “Mine is the same color when I purchased it.” And, “Genetics.”

A woman who claims to be a victim of mind control asks, “How do you function? How do you deal with manipulation in your personal lives, being individuals that are speaking out? Is there any secure communication? Can the whole body be scanned for implants, inside your teeth or your skull?”

Icke responds: “No technology exists in this frequency range more powerful than the human mind in its true power. When disconnected from that, we become open to technical manipulation. Is there any secure communication? I don’t give a shit. I say what I think on the Internet. I don’t worry about being harmed. If you don’t allow the idea of vulnerability into your reality, it cannot manifest. If it’s not your reality, you cannot project it. It never occurs to me that these guys can do anything to me.

“Those that were doing this [work] in fear of consequences were getting them. ‘I don’t know how long they’re gonna allow me to do this.’ They almost wore their bravery like a war medal. Courage is overcoming fear. If you don’t have fear you don’t need courage because there’s no fear to overcome. You just do it, get on with it, do what you believe to be right without the need for courage because there’s nothing to overcome.

“‘I’m doing dangerous things,’ they say, ‘but I keep on going. I’m sure they’re gonna do this to me if I keep on.’ They will get the consequences, and others who are just *doing* it, won’t. And because we create our own reality, what we allow into our field of possibility can manifest. If it doesn’t come it, it cannot manifest. I don’t worry about defending myself.”

Suddenly, as if on cue, an agitated man brandishing a pistol stalks out from the backstage area. Shouting, “The China card will be played big,” he aims his gun at Icke, who sits there calmly while the other panelists all duck under the table. A single shot rings out. Panic fills the air, and screams emanate from the audience. But it’s the would-be assassin, not Icke, who is the one that falls to the ground. The panel discussion has ended, and the auditorium is cleared.

I show my press credentials to a security guard and he allows me to stay. I can see a doctor hovering over the man, who is bleeding fiercely. When the doctor unbuttons the man’s shirt I notice that on his chest, just a couple of inches from the gaping wound, there is a patch with an orange-gold liquid inside it. The doctor pats it gently and says, “What the hell is this?” The man is able only to whisper, “He blew my goddam cover.” Then he gasps for breath. The doctor says he’s dead, and the security guard tells me I have to leave.

I had been looking forward all day to a room-service dinner of Colossal Pacific Coast Prawns simmered in Thai curry sauce with sticky rice and toasted coconut, but now I wasn’t hungry. I was too preoccupied with what had transpired that evening. I kept asking myself, “Who shot the mad scientist? And why?” I felt like a poker player who’s been dealt a hand of all blank cards.

Finally an epiphany arrived, and I knew exactly what I had to do. I made three phone calls, then went down to the bar to keep an appointment with David Icke that we had arranged early in the day. We selected a corner table, I took out my cellphone, dialed my own number at home, and when the answering machine started, I dialed the code to get my messages and handed the phone to Icke. This is what he heard:

“Hi, this is Paul, calling myself. I’ve already left a message on [my wife] Nancy’s answering machine, asking her to save this tape in case anything happens to me. About the shooting that took place here, I called my contact in the CIA who informed me that it was a Company job. They killed David Icke's friend before *he* could kill Icke. But why would they be *protecting* Icke? You'd think that they'd *want* him dead because he knows too much. Unless he happens to be one of *them* and they need him to continue spreading *dis*information. So now that this precaution has been taken, I will go and confront Icke."

He laughed.

"Nice try," he said. "First of all, don't worry, nothing's going to happen to you. But, by all means, keep that tape as a souvenir. You're right about one thing, though. I *am* protected by the CIA. Not because I'm one of them, but because I'm *not* one of them. If they wanted me dead, they could kill me any time they wanted. But they know I'm not spreading disinformation. You have to understand, these guys work strictly on a need-to-know basis. So it's not that I know too much, it's that *they* don't know *enough*.

"Because, if an individual agent knows too much, he may not do what he's been assigned to do. He must have a given order to do something, but if he knows that the end result is that somebody's going to be blown up twelve miles away—and all he's supposed to do is deliver an envelope—he may start thinking about it. So, various agents read my books and check my Web site and show up wherever I speak. It’ s a safety valve for them, on how far things are going.”

“Are you saying that the intelligence community has allowed you to function because *you* know more than any of *them*?”

“Exactly . . .”

* * *

On my return fight the next morning, I found myself reminiscing about the 1987-88 TV season, when I had been a writer and on-air commentator on *The Wilton North Report*, a nightly satirical hour on the Fox network that lasted only 21 shows. Critics blamed the hosts, a pair of disc jockeys who were not untalented but who were deliberately chosen for their inoffensiveness.

I had previously suggested as host Conan O’ Brien, a writer on the show who also did the audience warm-ups. “No,” said the producer, “he’ s not professional enough.” Ellen DeGeneres? “Too dykey.” Chris rock? “Too raw.” Rosie O’ Donnell? “Who wants to look at her every night?” Richard Belzer? “Too reptilian.” Belzer is a conspiracy researcher as well as a comedian and actor, but little did he ever dream that ultimately he—his reptilian self—could be the culmination of his own investigation.

Now, back home, the marketing of conspiracy was on a roll. *Majestic*, an interactive computer game revolving around a conspiracy involving corporate intrigue, was available. For $10 a month, tens of thousands of online players would receive screaming phone calls at midnight, faxes, anonymous emails and instant messages from mysterious informers directing them to research strange alien conspiracies and nefarious government activities. *Majestic* was suspended on September 12, 2001.

The invasion of the United States on September 11th was the mother of all conspiracies. Immediately there were those who began spinning scenarios of an inside job, an American version of the Reichstag Fire, carried out in order to justify the rise of a police state in the guise of security procedures. In any case, political opportunism has been providing the same results.

That Halloween, I was invited by producer Andy Meisler to be a panelist at the taping of a new TV series, *The Conspiracy Zone*. Although the plot behind the 9/11 terrorists was certainly a topic of conversation in the Green Room— "Do you think this is the endgame?" --the official subject that evening was the assassination of Robert Kennedy in 1968.

On the program, hosted by former *Saturday Night Live* cast member Kevin Nealon, I mentioned that Kennedy had once been on the *Tonight* show, telling Johnny Carson that cigarettes kill more people than marijuana, and I speculated that Sirhan Sirhan was a hired gun for the tobacco companies. On a more literal note, I talked about the ballistics Inconsistency; a total of ten bullets was found, though Sirhan’s gun could hold only eight.

And I discussed the fact that psychiatrist Bernard Diamond described in *Psychology Today* how, during the trial, post-hypnotic suggestion was used to program Sirhan into climbing the bars of his cell like a monkey. However, in the book *RFK Must Die*, Robert Kaiser, who was there, wrote: “Sirhan had no idea what he was doing up on the top of the bars. When he finally discovered that climbing was not his own idea, but rather Dr. Diamond’s, he was struck with the plausibility of the idea that perhaps he had been programmed by some else, in like manner, to kill Kennedy.”

There were two others on that TV panel, plus a separate segment with a dentist who practices hypnosis.

One panelist was Michael Ruppert, a former member of the Los Angeles Police Department, Narcotics Division, who became a prolific conspiracy researcher. Off camera, I asked what the turning point had been for him. He said that it was when his fiancée, a CIA operative, tried to involve him in drug smuggling, and he refused. Ruppert and I were both columnists for *High Times* then, but, he told me, “I don’t smoke grass.”

The other panelist was scheduled to be former Nixon speechwriter and now bespectacled, drone-voiced personality Ben Stein, but he canceled out at the last minute. Ann Coulter, former Justice Department attorney and Senate aide, now a professional reactionary and Stepford pundit, was at the studio for a subsequent taping about secret societies, and she was drafted into taking Stein’s place. A frequent guest on talk shows, Coulter is recognizable by her long blond hair, her short black skirt, and her drag-queen aura.

When she was a guest on CNBC’s *The Big Idea*, host Donny Deutsch asked her what an ideal country would be like, and she replied that it would be one in which everybody was a Christian. “We just want Jews to be perfected,” she said. As for Muslims, two days after the terrorist attacks on 9/11, she wrote in *National Review Online*, “We should invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity.” But now, the taping of *The Conspiracy Zone* had to be delayed because she was still in the makeup room.

"It takes a long time to turn Ben Stein into Ann Coulter," I explained.

During a break in the show, I suggested to her that the labels "conservative" and "liberal" had become obsolescent, and I asked what she thought might be appropriate substitute labels.

"Americans and cowards," she said.

"Yikes," I replied.

On another occasion, I got a call from *Conspiracy Zone* producer Andy Meisler. The show was featuring debates about cover-ups, ranging from Freemasons to bar codes to Hollow Earth. "The frightening thing," he observed, "is that life is so *random*. At least there's something comforting about conspiracies." He was calling me for recommendations as to who might be appropriate to appear on programs about the fix behind professional sports and the fix behind the election of George Bush. (The latter topic was discarded after 9/11.) He told me that the show would also deal with "unexplained deaths," such as Jimmy Hoffa, Marilyn Monroe and the Kennedys.

"Oh, that's so last century," I said. "Conspiracy research has evolved from 'Who Killed JFK?' to 'Who Fucked a Lizard From Outer Space?' "

One other thing. My visual mantra of the man who urinated and flossed simultaneously was replaced by a patriotic image of Cathy O’ Brien: “I was ushered away from my classmates,” she said, “and taken to an office where Michigan State Senator Guy VanderJagt was waiting with soon-to-be-president Gerald Ford. They laughed as he placed a small American flag in my rectum and instructed me to wave it.” Like all politicians, though, Ford merely *wrapped* himself in the American flag.

Swimming in the Dead Pool

When Ken Kesey’ s son Jed was killed in an accident--the van carrying his University of Oregon wrestling team had skidded off a cliff--I immediately flew to Oregon. “You were his favorite,” Kesey said as we embraced, sobbing. “I feel like every cell in my body is exploding,”

A few days later, several of us old friends were sitting around the dining-room table there, and someone mentioned that the Dead Kennedys were on tour.

“I wonder if Ted Kennedy is gonna go see ’ em,” I remarked.

Kesey, standing in the kitchen, responded, “That’ s not funny.”

“You’ re right. I apologize. It’ s not very abstract right now.”

“It’ s *never* abstract.”

I recalled that little dialogue as I began to explore The Game, now in its 34th year [2004], the longest-running dead pool in America, currently with 125 players. Before January 1st everyone submits 68 names of people who might die that year. (Dr. Death, co-founder of The Game, liked to work on a legal pad--34 lines, two columns, hence 68 names.) Points are awarded according to the age of each dead person--anybody in their 50s is worth five points; 60s, four; 70s, three.

Each participant gets one wild card per year worth five points no matter how old the deceased. Gamesters generally pick one-pointers for their wild card to get four extra points. Last year, most picked Bob Hope. When he died, one Gamester said, "My father was shot during World War II. While recuperating in England, Mr. Hope came up to his bedside and stuffed a half-dozen golf balls into his [own] mouth. It cheered my old man up."

Deaths become official when mentioned in the *New York Times* or any two major newspapers. One player "is extremely frustrated," I was told. "He has Idi Amin, who is on life support in a Saudi hospital. Now there have been death threats, and armed guards have been posted." Since the listees are all on various rungs on the ladder of celebrityhood, The Game is understandably rife with abstraction.

"After all, the dead pool has probably been around since the phenomenon of fame itself," write Gelfand and Wilkinson in the book *Dead Pool*. "It has certainly been around as long as gallows humor has. In the heyday of hard-boiled journalism (the *Front Page* days of the 1930s), reporters who covered a country ravaged by organized crime and engaged in a world war found respite in the dark humor of the dead pool. Even before the Internet, the dead pool was slowly emerging from the shadows of our culture.”

As with dead pools, ranging from business offices to Howard Stern’ s radio show, that book is a guide to profiting from money bets. But members of The Game play solely for the fun of it. Whoever has the most points at the end of the year wins-- “bragging rights only” —slightly ironic since Gamesters (lawyers, ad people, educators, psychology professors, writers, everyday working folks) all play under aliases like Frozen Stiff, Fade to Black, Worm Feast, Decomposers, 2 Dead Crew, Johnny B. Dead, Wm. Randolph Hearse, Daisy Pusher, Silk Shroud, Necrophiliac Pimp, Legion of Doom, Gang Green, Habeas Corpse, Die-Uretic, Shovelin’ Off, Blunt Instrument, Rig R. Mortis, Flatliners, Unplugged, Toe Tag, Clean Underwear and Gratefully Dead.

One couple, the Moorebids, insist, “We play for honor, not bragging rights. It has to do with honoring who you get the hit on.”

Another player told me, “I compare playing The Game to my day job, science. We do a lot of data collection and data analysis; play our hunches. Our reward is not financial, but peer recognition. One selects some names to acknowledge the person. Other names are selected because earning you points is their last opportunity to do something productive and honorable in their otherwise useless life. My most missed hit was Spiggy [Nixon’ s disgraced vice president, Spiro] Agnew; I was distressed at missing him.”

Each Gamester pays $10 to Pontius, official coordinataor and editor, to keep score and report the hits. There are players in over 30 states (23 in New York), plus one each in Quito, Kuwait, England and Australia. You can become a Gamester only by being recommended by another Gamester. They’ re mostly baby boomers, attracted by a whimsical, informative style of reporting.

Forty-nine Gamesters “hit” Buddy Ebsen. Obituaries mentioned that after ten days of filming *The Wizard of Oz*, Ebsen fell ill because of the aluminum make-up on his skin, and was replaced as the Tin Man by Jack Haley. (A suspicious player wondered, “Did Jack Haley add something to the aluminum make-up at the *Wizard* set?”) Conversely, there have been “solo’ s” on the unexpected demise of Princess Diana and JFK, Jr.

“A solo I am proud of,” one Gamester told me, “is the hit on Christian Nelson, who invented the Klondike Bar.”

“Yes, it’ s sick,” another player admitted, “but c’ mon, *it’ s just a game!* The Game is a light-hearted way of spitting in death’ s eye--your opportunity to pick a Generation-X rock star who OD’ s on heroin, a geriatric blue-hair who finally kicks the bucket, a fascist totalitarian in the Mid-East who is assassinated. I’m not doing great this year because I invested too heavily in Hamas, but I’m still in the top ten. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is doing its job--I just guessed wrong. Last year I scored on Khattab, a Chechnian rebel leader who was killed by a letter he opened that was poisoned. Our first poison-pen-letter death.”

But isn’t it somewhat ghoulish?

“Ghoulish?” a participant replied. “No more so than fantasy baseball. We can get up in the morning, and either pick up the newspaper or turn on the Internet to see if we scored, every day. It’s like baseball stats, you want to move up in the standings of the veterans. The reason we Gamesters play, I would say it’s about *style*. Style involves who you pick. Some concentrate on music, some on politics, some on sports.”

As for social significance, one player explained that “The pastime has been going on for more than four hundred years, so I don’t think it’s reflective of any given time or society. Every Gamester comes with their own perspective. The Game is irreverent, even a bit shocking, and some take pleasure in that. It’s a poke to the ribs that lie beneath stuffed shirts, a tweak of bluenoses. The Game is a competition—challenging, engaging and energizing. The Game heightens awareness and helps us to recognize our kinship with those whose deaths we note. The Game is a way of sharing and staying in touch with friends, whether near or far. It gives people a reason to call and correspond.”

Pontius’s predecessor, Ghostwriter, had thanked many folks in his farewell message, including “Persephone, who enabled me to say, ‘Yes,’ when a friend here in Central New York said, ‘Do you know a good adoption lawyer in Arkansas?’ It was my greatest cameo role, my finest hour as a networker, and I couldn’t have done it without The Game and this wise, wonderful woman.”

The Game’s listserv emails are titled “It’s a Hit!” They can be poignant, respectful, even sentimental: “July 4th—A score of swaying Gamesters were heard singing ‘I Can’t Get Enough of Your Love, Babe’ as each collected a five-note from velvety-voiced singer Barry White . . .”

Or they can sound like a warhorse race: “July 22nd—Mosul, Iraq. Qusay and Uday, the brutal and powerful sons of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, were ambushed by Special Forces and the 101st Airborne that resulted in a deadly four-hour firefight. Enjoying the best day of his career was Tomb Essence who had a 14-point Daily Double . . .”

But The Game giveth and the Game taketh away: “August 21st—British and American armed forces in Iraq announced today that they had arrested Ali Hasan al-Majid, aka Chemical Ali. Back in April 2003, the British armed forces announced they had killed him. Tomb Essence celebrated then, but is crying like a baby now.”

Animals have also been “scored,” from Morris the Cat to Dolly the cloned sheep to Keiko the killer whale. Choices can get personal, though. A player told me, “I purposely Left off a good friend [former *New York Post* editor Jerry Nachman] who I knew was dying, and one of our game mates refused to list a friend’s [famous] mother who knew she was dying. Sometimes we just don’t want to ‘cash in’ on our friends’ pain. How un-American of us.”

Gamesters have scored on all the Kennedys as well as Lorraine Petersen, the model on the Sunmaid Raisins box. But, under the title “It’s *Not* a Hit!” came this email: “August 9 th—The entire Game failed to list dancer and actor Gregory Hines, 57.” In The Game’s 2001 Hit List, under the subhead “Other Notable Deaths That No One Picked,” included was “Ken Kesey, 11/1201, author, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*.”

I had a visceral reaction. This was not abstract.

“I never could decide if leaving Kesey off my list was the right thing to do,” one Gamester told me. “The Merry Pranksters obviously inspired my *non de plume*, the Bury Pranksters.”

Trashing the Right to Read

Before Kenneth Foster’s death sentence was revoked at the last minute in August 2007, he had read a book, *Welcome to the Terrordome*, and he wrote a letter to the author, Dave Zirin:

> I have never had the opportunity to view sports in this way. And as I went through these revelations I began to have epiphanies about the way sports have a similar existence in prison. The similarities shook me. Facing execution, the only thing that I began to get obsessive about was how to get heard and be free, and as the saying goes, you can’t serve two gods.
>
> Sports, as you know, becomes a way of life. You monitor it, you almost come to breathe it. Sports becomes a way of life in prison, because it becomes a way of survival. For men that don’t have family or friends to help them financially, it becomes a way to occupy your time. That’s another sad story in itself, but it’s the root to many men’s obsession with sports.

Zirin writes, “It didn’t matter if he was on death row or Park Avenue, I felt smarter having read his words. But even more satisfying was the thought that thinking about sports took his mind--for a moment--away from his imminent death, the 11-year-old daughter he will never touch, and the words he will never write. I thought sending him my first book, *What’s My Name, Fool?: Sports and Resistance in the U.S.,* would be a good follow-up.”

But a form titled "Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice, Publication Review" was banned from Death Row because "It contains material that a reasonable person would construe as written solely for the purpose of communicating information designed to achieve the breakdown of prisons through offender disruption such as strikes or riots." Two pages were specifically mentioned.

Page 44 includes a quote from Jackie Robinson's autobiography referring to the blatant racism he suffered early in his rookie season: "I felt tortured and I tried to just play ball and ignore the insults but it was really getting to me. For one wild and rage-crazed moment I thought, 'To hell with Mr. Rickey's noble experiment. To hell with the image of the patient black freak I was supposed to create.' I could throw down my bat, stride over to that Phillies dugout, grab one of those white sons of bitches, and smash his teeth in with my despised black fist. Then I could walk away from it all."

And page 55 includes a passage about Jack Johnson's defeat of the "Great White Hope," Jim Jeffries: "Johnson was faster, stronger and smarter than Jeffries. He knocked Jeffries out with ease. After Johnson's victory, there were race riots around the country in Illinois, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Texas and Washington, D.C. Most of the riots consisted of white lynch mobs attacking blacks, and blacks fighting back. This reaction to a boxing match was one of the most widespread racial uprisings in the U.S. until the 1968 assassination of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr."

Zirin points out that "There was a time in Texas when it was illegal to teach slaves to read. The fear was that ideas could turn anger often directed inward into action against those with their boots on black necks. It is perhaps the most fitting possible tribute to Jackie Robinson and Jack Johnson that they still strike fear into the hearts of those wearing the boots."

In the Dallas County jail, one of the largest in the country, *all* publications are refused, including daily newspapers such as the *Dallas Morning News*. "They seem to have a rather callous disregard for the Constitution," said Paul Wright, publisher of Seattle-based *Prison Legal News*, with a circulation of 9,000. He filed a federal lawsuit challenging the ban on First Amendment grounds, and won. His lawyer, Scott Medlock, prisoner rights attorney with the Texas Civil Rights Project, points out that some jails have argued that prisoners can watch TV news in jail, so they don't need access to publications.

Prison Legal News is also preparing a lawsuit against the Utah Department of Corrections for a policy that bars all books except those that are shipped directly from Barnes & Noble. Generally, prisons require that books be sent directly from the publisher or a major distributor, for security reasons. Otherwise, a spokesperson for one jail explains, “There’s a possibility something could be in one of the pages that we don’t want. There could be little bits of drugs in the pages.”

“We have not yet sued them.” Wright told me, “since they only sporadically censor us and aren’t letting us develop a good fact pattern.”

A spokesperson for the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department said that its jails allow inmates to receive books from booksellers after checking to see whether they can be fashioned into a weapon, promote violence or have sexually explicit content. Across the country, only paperbacks are accepted. Hardcovers are rejected because they provide “source material” for fashioning weapons. When the Supreme Court ruled that law libraries did not have to be provided to prisoners, jails in Montana not only removed the entire contents of the law library, but they also removed the typewriters.

Washington State has tried to keep *Prison Legal News* itself out of prisons. First, the Department of Corrections prohibited inmates from receiving nonprofits. *PLN* sued and won. Next, the state issued a rule that inmates couldn’ t receive publications that were paid out of their trust accounts. *PLN* managed to get that rule overturned too. Then the prisons adopted a policy of not delivering subscription-renewal notices. _*PLN* took that to court and succeeded in getting the policy reversed. *PLN* has won similar lawsuits or settlements in Alabama, California, Michigan, Nevada and Oregon.

While serving five years in a California prison for growing medical marijuana, Todd McCormick contributed a couple of stories--about his experiences with psilocybin and ketamine--to my anthology, *Magic Mushrooms and Other Highs: From Toad Slime to Ecstasy,* and when it was published, I immediately sent him a copy. But the warden rejected it “because on pages 259-261, it describes the process of squeezing toads to obtain illicit substances which could be detrimental to the security, good order and discipline of the institution.”

This was pure theater of cruelty. Federal correctional facilities do not have a toad problem, and outside accomplices have not been catapulting loads of toads over barbed wire fences to provide the fuel for a prison riot. McCormick wrote to me, "Can you believe this shit! I wonder how much we pay the guy/girl who actually sits and reads every book that comes in for offending passages. How about you tear out pages 259-261 and re-send this book back with a copy of the rejection and a notation that the offending pages have been removed."

Which is exactly what I did. This time, though, my cover letter to the warden was ignored, and the book was returned, stamped "Unauthorized." I had called their bluff. Obviously, McCormick was being punished simply because he could be. I then corresponded with several prison correspondents around the country to find out what inmates had not been allowed to read. I wanted to see other examples of arbitrary and frivolous censorship by prison personnel. Here are some results of my informal survey:

* "The Texas Department of Corrections blocked Bo Lozoff's *Breaking Out of Jail*, a book about teaching meditation to prison inmates."

* "Disallowed: *Trainspotting* because of its 'glorification of drug use.' Tom Robbins' *Still Life With Woodpecker* because it has a chapter that 'contains information about bombmaking.' "

* “An inmate couldn’ t get nude pictures of his wife sent to him but he could get a subscription to *Playboy*. The rationale: A wife deserved more respect.”

* “They kept out *The Anarchists Cookbook*. And no kiddie porn, no tales or photos suggesting sex with a guard, no photos showing frontal or rear nudity--not even a wife or friend.”

* “The Utah prison system banned *Rolling Stone* as being an anarchist publication.”

* “*A Revolution in Kindness* is banned from the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola as ‘a threat to internal security.’ It was intended for Herman Wallace, who contributed an essay about how he organized a chess tournament on his cellblock as a way of easing tensions and minimizing violence between inmates. Wallace is one of the Angola Three, Black Panthers who have been in solitary confinement for [more than three decades] trying to improve conditions in the ‘bloodiest prison in America’ in the early 1970s.”

* “All hardback books forbidden, because the covers could be fashioned into weapons. Educational textbooks--a new rule precludes prisoners on Death Row [including this particular prisoner] or in lockdown from taking correspondence courses--and I’ ve had a couple of books

returned to sender on the claim they appeared to be for a course. *MAPS* [Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies]--their publication was sent back several times because maps are not allowed in here. *High Times* was repeatedly denied because it posed a danger to the safe, secure and orderly operation of the institution. 'Smut mags' like *Hustler* are reviewed monthly."

* "There's a whole new genre of men's magazines--*Maxim, Stuff, For Him*--which show it all except for nipples and beaver. Now the feds want to ban *Maxim* due to 'security' reasons. The 'rejected mail' slip they send you when some verboten material arrives has boxes to check (to specify offending matter), one of which says 'pubic hair.' "

* "Peace activist William Combs spent eight days in solitary confinement for receiving and sharing with other inmates what federal authorities consider disruptive, if not subversive, political literature. The offending 'propaganda' included commentary by such extremists as Bill Moyers and Ellen Goodman, and included an article published in *Reader's Digest*. The common thread was that they all questioned the wisdom of government policy."

The name of the game is control in the guise of security--a microcosm of the nation outside prison walls--the practice of power without compassion.

After *Magic Mushrooms and Other Highs* was rejected for the second time, I appealed to the Regional Director of the Bureau of Prisons (as instructed by the warden) for an independent review. I also wrote to the ACLU. I heard back from neither. Todd McCormick was released from prison in December 2003. Among so many other things to catch up on, he would finally be able to read what he had written. However, he was discharged to a halfway house, where all his books and magazines were confiscated as "paraphernalia."

Postscript: Prisoners at a jail in South Carolina are being denied any reading material other than the Bible. In May 2011, the ACLU asked a federal judge to block enforcement of that policy. A staff member at the prison told plaintiff *Prison Legal News*: "Our inmates are only allowed to receive soft back bibles in the mail directly from the publisher. They are not allowed to have magazines, newspapers, or any other type of books." There is no library there, and since 2008, all copies of *Prison Legal News* that were sent to prisoners have been "returned to sender."

In July 2017, the national Human Rights Defense Center organization has filed a federal lawsuit against the Kentucky Department of Corrections for violating free speech. It has unconstitutionally blocked the delivery of many books to state prisoners, including the *Prisoner Diabetes Handbook,* the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary of Law,* and the *Prisoners Self-Help Litigation Manual.*

Welcome to Camp Mogul

My irreverent friend, Khan Manka, Chairman & CEO of Manka Brothers Studios, had broken his ankle and was afraid he wouldn’t be able to attend the 26th annual gathering of the nation’s most powerful executives and their trophy wives in Sun Valley, Idaho. I really wanted to spy on this 2008 summer camp for billionaires, so I suggested that Manka get a wheelchair, then I could serve as his official wheelchair pusher, and he immediately went for the idea.

This by-now traditional five-day extravaganza for three hundred guests was hosted by Wall Street investment banker Herbert Allen, President and CEO of Allen & Company. There were moguls all over the campground, overflowing with the country’s most influential leaders in business, entertainment and media. I could feel myself developing a severe case of imposter syndrome.

Saturday was Talent Night, and it was absolutely hysterical. Part-time Sun Valley resident Tom Hanks served as the emcee. Warren Buffett was the opening act, performing a medley of Jimmy Buffett songs, all rendered out of tune. Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos skillfully juggled five Kindles (wireless electronic books). Edgar Bronfman from Warner Music--dressed like the character Tevya in *Fiddler on the Roof*--sang with zest, "If I Were a Rich Man." Yahoo CEO Jerry Yang--who had previously turned down an offer from Microsoft to buy Yahoo--sang a duet with the ex-CEO of Microsoft, Bill Gates, harmonizing on a song from *Annie Get Your Gun*, "Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better." Meg Whitman of EBay did a striptease, auctioning off each item of clothing, one at a time, and over 3 million dollars was raised for an unnamed charity. Oracle Corp. CEO Larry Ellison gave a hilarious lecture on "How to Destroy Evidence and Make False Statements."

There had been a lot of drinking in the evening, and it was obviously too much booze that loosened up Fox mogul Rupert Murdoch's tongue. He was shouting at the moon: "Who says there are twenty-seven million slaves around the world? And where the fuck can *I* get one? How would anybody know it’ s twenty-seven million anyway? Do they have census takers or *what*? You tell me! I’ ll decide!”

Also, a screaming match broke out between Google co-founder Sergei Brin and Google CEO Eric Schmidt, over the infamous cover of the *New Yorker*, which depicted Barack and Michelle Obama as the new President and First Lady, a terrorist couple doing that fist-bump gesture in the Oval Office. Sergei thought it was a brilliant satirical illustration, but Eric thought it was racist and irresponsible.

Last year, the surprise guest was former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. This year, it was Steven Beschloss, the editor of a new magazine, scheduled to be launched in October 2008 and be delivered to 100,000 U.S. households with an average net worth of $25 million. There were piles of preview copies scattered about.

While Beschloss was holding court in an outdoor area, annoying mosquitoes kept buzzing around the crowd. Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, yelled at him, “I guess we’ ll never hear *your* readers whining about a mental recession. And those of your subscribers who were in the sub-prime mortgage industry--these mosquitoes are *their* fault, because, along with all the home foreclosures they’ re responsible for, the stagnant water in abandoned pools turns into new breeding grounds for mosquitoes.”

Someone yelled out, “Where are you from, In-Your-Facebook?” Others drowned out Zuckerberg’s apparently serious rant by singing the mogul version of a couple of good old-fashioned camp songs, “This Land Is *My* Land, This Land Is *My* Land” and “KumBuyYahoo.” I couldn’t help but notice that billionaire activist Carl Icahn snapped his fingers as if having an epiphany; a week later he ended up on Yahoo’s board of directors.

Khan Manka explained that the bigwigs at these events have so-called “informal” meetings which always take place where a pair of individuals can have their discussions alone without any interruption--on the golf course, hiking along an isolated trail, fly-fishing at Silver Creek--but Manka had been privy to only one specific example that he could share.

“Back in 1995,” he told me, “Disney honcho Michael Eisner met with Robert Iger, who was then the head of ABC. And exactly one month later, these two giant companies merged into one media megamonster. Coincidence? I don’t think so. Their deal had been sealed when Eisner and Iger exchanged friendship bracelets that they had worked on at Camp Mogul.”

HIGHER THAN THOU

Checkmating With Pawns

It was a hot day at the chess tournament in Phoenix, Arizona—103 degrees, to be exact—and 14-year-old Nathaniel Dight was elated over his custom-made chess set. Those carved wooden pieces had been weighted precisely for the smooth moves he liked to make. Each one had been lacquered and, for this extreme heat, carefully protected by matte acrylic spray. But before the game could begin, young Nathaniel was ordered to take a urine test.

“I know why you’re doing this,” he snarled. “It’s because I’ve won three tournaments in a row, isn’t it?”

“No, son, that’s just a coincidence. This is a random drug test.”

“I don’t do any drugs. I mean like when I get a headache from playing chess too long, I won’t even take an aspirin.”

“Look, here’s a cup. I need you to go fill it, right now . . .”

All right, I confess, I made all that up, but consider the implications of something that I *haven’t* made up:

America’s drug czar, Barry McCaffrey, wrote in an article published in *Chess Life* magazine: “Research proves that mentoring youngsters and teaching them games like chess can build resilience in the face of illegal drug use and other destructive temptations. Drug testing is as appropriate for chess players as for shot-putters, or any other competitors who use their heads as well as their hands.”

Accompanying the television image of a couple of eggs sizzling in a frying pan, the phrase, “This is your brain on drugs” has always carried negative connotations, but apparently General McCaffrey has changed his mind about that. He now seems to believe that drugs can actually *improve* the way your brain functions.

There was an infamous chess player named Alexander Alekhine who held the world championship longer than anybody else. His games often had superb surprise endings, known in chess circles as “brilliancies.” For instance, he would checkmate with a pawn move that no sane and sober mind could ever imagine. However, he was a notorious alcoholic, and McCaffrey is only referring to illegal drugs.

“Just when I thought I’d heard it all from McCaffrey,” was the reaction of Allen St. Pierre, executive director of the NORML (National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws) Foundation. “Drug testing for chess players? What’s next from this overreaching drug czar? Drug testing for tiddlywinks players? How about bingo players?”

Moreover, McCaffrey’s proposal smacks of subliminal racism. Social psychologist Walli Leff tells me, “I think most of the movement to involve young people in chess is directed toward the African-American community, and the assumption is, if the kids are black they’re going to be drug users. I think white middle-class suburban parents would have a fit if their kids had to take drug tests for their extracurricular activities. Or am I out of it and am I missing a new, white middle-class suburban submissiveness?”

McCaffrey had been influenced by Chesschild, a group sponsored by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). Chesschild is a substance abuse prevention program conducted in libraries and schools, promoting a combination of drug-free lifestyles and chess.

“Policy recommendations like this one from ONDCP,” said St. Pierre, “demonstrate a deep and disturbing pathology that goes well beyond opposing drug-law reform efforts.”

Maybe the drug-law reformers should follow the example of gay-rights activists by having celebrities come out of the pot-smoking closet. Already, veteran stand-up comic George Carlin—in an interview by *The Daily Show’s* Jon Stewart following Carlin’s HBO special—admitted that he smokes a joint to help him "fine-tune" his material. "One hit is all I need now and it's punch-up time."

At the Shadow Convention that took place while the Democrats were in Los Angeles, Bill Maher revealed to the audience, "I'm not just a pot reformer, I'm a user"—something which ABC forbids him to say on *Politically Incorrect*—then quickly added, "Just making a light remark there, federal authorities."

Actor and hemp activist Woody Harrelson has stated, "I do smoke." Willie Nelson confirmed in his autobiography that he smoked pot in the White House. And on KRLA, radio talk-show host Michael Jackson's program, Michelle Phillips, actress and former member of the Mamas and the Papas, said that she still enjoys smoking marijuana.

Just as Ellen DeGeneres appeared on the cover of *TIME* magazine saying, "Yep, I'm gay," there might come a day when a presidential candidate will appear on the cover of *Newsweek* saying, "Yep, I'm stoned." Isn't that what young pot-smokers need—good role models—so they won't be ashamed of their private pleasure seeking?

Meanwhile, drug czar McCaffrey would continue his crusade, not only against illegal substances, but perhaps also against certain food supplements, such as a popular herbal mixture with a reputation for aiding memory and concentration. Who could ever have dreamed that chess players might get in trouble for using ginkgo biloba as a performance enhancer?

Tim Leary, Ram Dass, and Me

In 1964, I assigned Robert Anton Wilson to write a front-cover article in *The Realist,* which he titled “Timothy Leary and His Psychological H-Bomb.” When that issue was published, Leary invited me to visit the Castalia Foundation, his borrowed estate in Millbrook, New York.

The name Castalia came from *The Bead Game* by Herman Hesse, and indeed, the game metaphor permeated our conversation. Leary talked about the way people are always trying to get you onto their game-boards. He discussed the biochemical process “imprinting” with the same passion that he claimed he didn’t believe anything he was saying, but somehow I managed to believe him when he told me that I had an honest mind.

“I have to admit,” I said, “that my ego can’t help but respond to your observation.”

“Listen,” he assured me, “anybody who tells you he’s transcended his ego . . .”

Leary and his research partner, Ram Dass (then Richard Alpert) were about to do a lecture series on the West Coast. At the University of California in Berkeley, there was an official announcement that the distribution only of "informative" literature (as opposed to "persuasive" literature) would be permitted on campus, giving rise to the Free Speech Movement, with thousands of students protesting the ban in the face of police billy clubs.

Leary argued that such demonstrations played right onto the game boards of the administration and the police alike, and that the students could shake up the establishment much more if they would just stay in their rooms and change their nervous systems. But it wasn't really a case of either-or. You could protest *and* explore your 13-billion-cell mind simultaneously.

I became intrigued by the playful and subtle patterns of awareness that Leary and Alpert manifested. If their brains had been so damaged, as mythologized by mainstream media, how come their perceptions were so sharp? I began to research the LSD phenomenon, and in April 1965 I returned to Millbrook for my first acid experience. Tim Leary was supposed to be my guide, but he had gone off to India.

Dick Alpert was supposed to take his place, but he was too involved in getting ready to open at the Village Vanguard as a comedian-philosopher. I chatted with him for a while. He was soaking his body in a bathtub, preparing his psyche for the Vanguard gig. He had taken 300 acid trips, but there I was, a first-timer, standing in the open doorway, reversing roles and comforting him in his anxiety about entering show business.

When I told my mother about taking LSD, she was quite concerned. She warned me, "It could lead to marijuana." And she was right. It did.

After Leary got arrested in Texas for possession of pot, the notoriety of his research in Millbrook spread. Law enforcement in nearby Poughkeepsie, led by Assistant District Attorney G. Gordon Liddy, raided the estate. In the summer of 1966, Leary and his associates ran a two-week seminar on consciousness expansion, culminating in a theatrical production of Hesse's *Steppenwolf* legend that weaved its way around the Millbrook grounds and buildings. Leary invited Liddy and members of the grand jury that indicted him, but none showed up.

Leary told me about prominent people whose lives had been changed by taking LSD: actor Cary Grant, director Otto Preminger, think-tanker Herman Kahn, Alcoholics Anonymous founder Bill Wilson, *TIME* magazine publishers Henry and Clare Boothe Luce. Of course, it wasn't so difficult to drop out when you had such a stimulating scene to drop into. On the day that he announced the formation of a new religion, the League for Spiritual Discovery (LSD), I signed up as their first heretic.

Alpert and I enjoyed what he called “upleveling” each other with honesty. On one occasion, we were at a party. I was particularly manic and he pointed it out, choosing an eggbeater as his analogy. I appreciated his reflection and calmed down.

On stage at the Village Theater, Alpert was sitting in the lotus position on a cushion, talking about his mother dying and how there seemed to be a conspiracy on the part of relatives and hospital personnel alike to deny her the realization of that possibility. He also talked about some fellow in a mental institution who thought he was Jesus Christ. Conversely, I teased him about discussing his mother openly but concealing the fact that the man who thought he was Christ was his brother--death obviously carrying more respectability than craziness. At his next performance, Alpert identified the man as his brother.

* * *

The essential difference between Tim Leary and G. Gordon Liddy was that Leary wanted people to use LSD as a vehicle for expanding consciousness, whereas Liddy wanted to put LSD on the steering wheel of columnist Jack Anderson’s car, thereby making a political assassination look like an automobile accident. But who could have predicted that, sixteen years after the original arrest, Leary would end up traveling around with Liddy in a series of debates?

I attended the debate in Berkeley in April 1982. Leary warned the audience that Liddy was a lawyer-- "trained in the adversary process, not to seek truth. I was trained as a scientist--looking for truth, delighted to be proved wrong." He confessed that "Liddy is the Moriarty to my Sherlock Holmes--the adversary I always wanted--he is the Darth Vader to my Mr. Spock."

"As long as it's not Doctor Spock," said Liddy. He argued that "the rights of the state transcend those of the individual." Not that he was without compassion. "I feel sorry," he admitted, "for anybody who uses drugs for aphrodisiacal purposes."

"Gordon doesn't know anything about drugs," countered Leary. "It's probably his only weakness." He looked directly at Liddy. "It's my duty to turn you on," he said, "and I'm gonna do it before these debates are over." Then he made a unique offer: "I'll eat a rat if you'll eat a hashish cookie."

Liddy turned down the offer--one can carry machismo only so far, and he had to draw the line somewhere--but he did provide appropriate grist for my own stand-up comedy mill. According to Liddy's book, he actually ate a rat. He did it to overcome his fear of eating rats. Certainly a direct approach to the problem. None of that *gestalt* shit. Now, I'm not sure how he ate the rat, whether he just stuck it between a couple of slices of bread, or barbecued it first, or chopped the rat up and mixed it with vegetables in a stew.

But there were rumors that when Leary and Liddy were on tour, the Psychedelic Liberation Front found out their itinerary and began feeding hash brownies to rats and releasing them, one by one, in Liddy's room at the various motels he stayed at, while he was debating, in the hope that nature would sooner or later take its course, and one night Liddy would feel in the mood for a midnight snack, catch the rat that was left in the room, eat it and, by extension, the hash brownie the rat had eaten, and then Liddy would think he got stoned from eating the rat. This would, of course, be right on the borderline on the ethics of dosing.

* * *

Each tablet of Owsley White Lightning contained 300 micrograms of LSD. I had purchased a large enough supply from Alpert to finance his trip to India. The day before he left to meditate for six months, we sat in a restaurant discussing the concept of choiceless awareness while trying to decide what to order on the menu.

In India, he gave his guru three tablets, and apparently nothing happened. Alpert's postcard to me beckoned, "Come fuck the universe with me." Instead, I stayed tripping in America, where I kept my entire stash of acid in a bank vault deposit box.

Richard Alpert returned as Baba Ram Dass. Eventually, he dropped the Baba. He was now just plain Ram Dass. His father called him Rum Dum. His brother called him Rammed Ass. One afternoon he was visiting me, and I taped our conversation.

"In 1963," I said, "I predicted as a joke that Tiny Tim would get married on the Johnny Carson show, and in 1969 it happened. You and I talked about that, and you called it 'astral humor,' but I never knew exactly what you meant by that phrase."

"Well, it's like each plane of reality is in a sense a manifestation of a plane prior to it, and you can almost see it like layers, although to think of it in space is a fallacy because it's all the same space, but you could think of it that way. And so there are beings on upper planes who are instruments of the law. I talk about miracles a lot, but I don't live in the world of miracles, because they're not miracles to me. I'm just dealing with the humor of the miracle concept from within the plane where it seems like a miracle, which is merely because of our very narrow concept of how the universe works."

Ram Dass knew of my involvement with conspiracy theory. "I'm just involved in a much greater conspiracy," he continued. "You can't grasp the size of the conspiracy I understand--but there's no conspirator--it's the wrong word. That's why I say it's just natural law. It is all perfect."

"Would you agree with the concept--what William Blake said, that humans were created 'for joy and woe'--the implication of which is that there will always be suffering?"

"I think that suffering is part of man's condition, and that's what the incarnation is about, and that's what the human plane is."

So I asked Ram Dass, "If you and I were to exchange philosophies--if I believed in reincarnation and you didn't--how do you think our behavior would change?" He paused for a moment. "Well," he said, "if you believed in reincarnation, you would never ask a question like that."

And then his low chuckle of amusement and surprise blossomed into an uproarious belly laugh of delight and triumph as he savored the implications of his own Zen answer. I would find myself playing that segment of the tape with his bell-shaped spasm of laughter over and over again, like a favorite piece of music.

Remembering Scott Kelman

Scott Kelman had seen me perform stand-up satire at Town Hall in New York in 1962, and again twenty years later at the L.A. Stage Company in Hollywood. He moved to Los Angeles and in 1984 launched an alternative theater in the grungy, old, industrial skid-row area of downtown. He named it the Wallenboyd (at the corner of Wall and Boyd) Theater and invited me to open there as soon as it was completed.

In fact, on the first night of my performances, the crew was still banging in the final nails. At the time, I was living in San Francisco, so Scott slept at his office and I stayed at his apartment in Venice Beach. A year later, I moved to an apartment on that same block. Scott became my producer and my close friend. We never had any need for a signed contract.

As my producer, he would occasionally give me suggestions and I would follow those that I felt worked for me. He'd say in his distinctive gravelly voice (he was addicted to cigarettes), "It doesn't matter if you fuck up—it's how you recover." That was theatrical advice, but it also applied to life.

And it was a two-way street. For Scott, whatever happened in life automatically became grist for his theatrical mill. He was an exemplary explorer. Knowing I was an unbeliever, he once asked me, “What do atheists say during sex when they come?”

“Oh, *no*-God!” I responded, interspersing those words with moans and groans. “Oh, *no*-God! Oh, *no*-God! Oh, *no*-God!” He suggested that I expand that concept into a stage piece, and it evolved into a ten-minute meditation on the relationship between religion and orgasms.

Scott conducted theatrical workshops, and one of his students was John Densmore, the former drummer for The Doors. “I stumbled into the downtown art scene,” Densmore told me, “after a big peak in rock’n’roll. It felt as creative as the ’60s. I now get off on the *process*, and it doesn’t matter if it’s fifty people at the Wallenboyd or twenty thousand at Madison Square Garden, it’s the work that rings my bell.”

Scott also produced Peter Bergman, of the Firesign Theatre. Scott thought that *Peter, Paul and Harry* would be a great title for an evening of political satire at the Museum of Contemporary Art. He asked the curator if she knew of an appropriate performer named Harry. She suggested Harry Shearer. Scott asked me about him. “He’s brilliant,” I said, “let’s do it.” And so he produced a completely sold-out series that was extended for two weekends.

But if Harry had been named after his *other* grandfather, there wouldn’ t have been a *Peter, Paul and Harry*. Each of us prepared to perform in our own particular way. Peter stared at himself in the mirror and made strange sounds to exercise his vocal cords. Harry sat in a separate room where his makeup woman, who had flown in from Iowa, transformed him into Derek Smalls from the mockumentary *Spinal Tap.*

And I was off hiding behind some boxes, toking away on a joint of the marijuana that served as my creative fuel. Scott was sure that I performed better when I wasn’ t high, and he was under the impression I was straight when he told me one night, “That was the best show you’ ve ever done.” I confessed that I had smoked a giant doobie before I went onstage. The irony was that Scott sold pot to help pay the rent, and that was exactly the stash that got me stoned that night.

The 20th Anniversary of the Summer of Love

I never went to any of my high school or college reunions, but I couldn't resist attending the twentieth anniversary of the Summer of Love in San Francisco. At noon on the summer solstice of 1987, young and middle-aged hippies--gray hair and potbellies, but not having erased a certain gleam in their eyes--were marching in an All Beings parade down Haight Street. Costumes ranged from a giant snail to Zippy the Pinhead.

One fellow still in civilian clothes explained, “I was supposed to be Tarzan, but I had to wash the dishes.”

Local countercultural fixtures were all there: The Mime Troupe, Rosie Radiator and her fleet of tap dancers, the Automatic Human Juke Box, and a panhandler asking, “Can you spare a hundred dollars?” The buses now had posters that suggested *Shop the Haight*.

The charm of that entrepreneurial urge was not to be confused with the mission of the Haight-Ashbury Preservation Society, whose targets were symbolized by a walking Big Mac cheeseburger, a prisoner of Thrifty’ s in chain-store chains, mock pallbearers carrying a casket to mourn the wished-for death of Round Table Pizza, a sign warning *Don't Mall the Haight*! and somebody in a Merlin the Magician outfit with a placard, *You don't need magic to fight the franchising*. A lone, sad-faced clown bore a banner with a white dove in a red heart.

In Golden Gate Park, an emcee asked the crowd a series of rhetorical questions to rev them up: "How many people were here in the sixties? . . . How many are here now? . . . How many don't know? . . . How many don't care?" A musician announced, "We were told not to have amplifiers, but we decided to break the law today." Hog Farmer Sharon Share-alike offered her roll of hard candy to novelist Herb Gold, which immediately aroused his fear of dosing. He asked, "These really are Life Savers, right?"

The Summer of Love reunion continued at the I-Beam, a disco on Haight Street. On stage, I compared the decades:

> In the sixties, marijuana was ten dollars an ounce. In the eighties, it's three hundred. In the sixties, teenagers used to hide their pot smoking from their parents. In the eighties, parents have to hide it from their kids. In the sixties, the favorite chemical drug was LSD. In the eighties, it's Ecstasy. In the sixties, Ken Kesey wasn't allowed to donate blood because he had ingested acid. In the eighties, there are those who are afraid to get a blood transfusion because of AIDS. In the sixties, Lenny Bruce got arrested for saying "cocksucker" on stage. In the eighties, Meryl Streep got an Academy Award for saying it in *Sophie's Choice.* Now, almost the entire audience at a Grateful Dead concert is younger than the number of years the band has been together--but these kids have less deconditioning to go through than we did. They have less innocence to lose.
>
> When a group of students and other protesters, including Abbie Hoffman and Amy Carter (the president's daughter), won their case against CIA recruiting on campus by using a "necessity defense," attorney Leonard Weinglass told me that the turning point for the

> jury was the testimony of Ralph McGehee, who revealed how he had been recruited right off the football field by the CIA, only to become a star player in their assassination-squad program. Members of the jury would not have voted that way in the sixties because they weren't prepared to believe such testimony as they are in the eighties.
>
> In the sixties, we knew that the CIA was smuggling heroin from Southeast Asia. And in the eighties we know that they're smuggling cocaine from Central America. The same planes that fly weapons for the *contras* to airports in Panama, Honduras and Costa Rica come back to Florida, Louisiana and Arkansas with their cargoes filled to the brim with cocaine, even though the administration is carrying on its anti-drug campaign. The pilots only have to be careful to evade the radar screen. So while Nancy Reagan is saying, "Just say no," the CIA is saying, "Just fly low."

Meanwhile, the quality of co-option had not been strained. The slogan "Today is the first day of the rest of your life" was used in a TV commercial for Total breakfast cereal. Tampax promoted its tampon as "Something over thirty you can trust." Beatles songs were used to sell cars, or, if you preferred to walk, they also sold sneakers. *Time* magazine was being peddled by the Byrds' version of Pete Seeger's song, "Turn, Turn, Turn" --based on Ecclesiastes—t here's a *time* for this and a *time* for that, get it?

The Youngbloods once sent a copy of their song "Get Together" to every member of Congress and the Senate, with a suggestion that it be established as the new national anthem, but who could ever have guessed that it was really destined to become a jingle in a jeans commercial? Or that a Jefferson Airplane song would be used in a bank commercial? Or that Timothy Leary would model a Gap shirt for a full-page ad in *Interview,* and Ram Dass would peddle a rejuvenating skin cream at a Saks Fifth Avenue counter? *People* magazine was selling the twentieth anniversary of the Summer of Love with a feature story set off by a double-paged cover with psychedelic artist Peter Max's signature on both pages.

In red spray paint, on a brick wall just off Haight Street, standing out among the graffiti like John Hancock's signature on the Declaration of Independence, this message summed it all up: *Love Is Revenue.*

POLITICS

The Last Election

The Republicans’ party line that Barack Obama was “palling around with terrorists” didn’t work, although some people believed it because then they wouldn’t need a racist reason not to vote for Obama. Next, the campaign acted as though his advocacy of age-appropriate sex education for kindergarteners meant putting condoms on cucumbers. That didn’t work, either. Then John McCain tried calling him a “socialist.” Also didn’t work. Ironically, Socialist Party candidate Norman Thomas ran for president six times, and never won, but every one of his platform planks were eventually adopted by Democrats and Republican administrations alike. They just didn’t *call* it socialism.

In January 2009, Christian broadcaster Pat Robertson stated that God told him America is headed for veritable socialism as well as an economic rebound under President-elect Obama. “What the Lord was saying,” he claimed, “the people are willing to accept socialism to alleviate their pain. Cast off all the gloom and the doom because things are getting ready to turn around. I say with humility, I hope I’ve heard the Lord. I spend time praying and asking him for wisdom, and if there’s a mistake, it’s not his fault, it’s mine.” Humility in action.

In any case, one of the factors in Obama’s win was indeed the confidence-destroying financial crisis, and now he faces a food chain of euphemisms. Hey, is this like the Great Depression? Nah, it’s not a depression, it’s only a recession. Wait, it’s not a recession, it’s just an economic downturn. No, it’s not an economic downturn, it’s a correction. Oops, it’s not a correction, it’s an adjustment. Hurry, get me a chiropractor. Similarly, there’s a food-chain of solutions to the problem. From the Troubled Asset Relief Program to the Bailout Bill to the Rescue Package to the Emergency Economic Stability Act to Alan Greenspan confessing “My bad” to Free Botox for Everybody.

Perhaps the most bizarre byproduct of the campaign began with an anonymous ad on Craigslist, headlined: “Need Sarah Palin Lookalike ASAP for Adult Film.” The pay would be $3,000 and, it was duly noted, “No anal required.” This porn flick, it turned out, would be shot by Hustler Video, and no, Tina Fey did not apply for the job. The climactic scene was a threesome with Sarah Palin, Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Clinton.

Hillary was played by veteran porn star and sex educator Nina Hartley, who told me that “The big hullabaloo over the movie is being generated by feminists from both the pro- and anti-porn sides. They're up in arms that ‘women are being non-consensually satirized’ by Big Evil Porn, and The Big Bad Larry Flynt. The usual nonsense from the usual suspects. Even some pro-porn feminists are upset at Palin being ‘targeted’ by porn. They conveniently overlook the fact that most porn satirizes white men in power: politicians, police, professors. Most recent case in point, *The Elliot Splizter Story* . . ."

Who's Nailin' Paylin was ready for release before the election, as was an issue of the horror comic book *Tales From the Crypt*, which featured on the cover a painting of Sarah Palin swinging her hockey stick to disperse the Vault-Keeper and other ghoulish characters as she sneeringly asks, "Didn't we get rid of you guys in the '50s?" --a reference to the censorship problems faced decades ago by EC Comics, the original publisher of *Tales From the Crypt*, and concomitantly a criticism of Palin for her "rhetorical question" about removing objectionable books from library shelves.

However, another publisher was producing a comic-book biography of Palin that wouldn't be released until February 2009, so two endings were prepared. But an edition of *South Park*--broadcast the day after the election--took a risk with only one ending, which lampooned Obama's victory. Co-creator Trey Parker explained, "We're just going to make the Obama version, and if McCain somehow wins, we’re basically just totally screwed.” Likewise, Garry Trudeau gambled that Obama would win, and his syndicated *Doonesbury* strip--published the day after the election--depicted three soldiers in Iraq watching the returns on TV as a reporter is saying, “And it’s official--Barack Obama has won.”

Some editors were undecided about whether to publish it. Trudeau encouraged them to choose hope over fear. “If I’m wrong,” he told the *Los Angeles Times*, “it’ll be my face that’ll be covered with eggs, not theirs.” *Times* editors had decided, in the interest of accuracy, to wait for the election results, and if Obama won, they would publish the strip on Thursday, but then they must have realized it was just a comic strip, not investigative journalism, and they published it on Wednesday after all.

Trudeau thought that newspapers should run the strip because “polling data gives McCain a 3.7% chance of victory.” Indeed, a week after Obama’s win, McCain himself admitted to Jay Leno, “I can read the polls--they tried to keep ’em from me.” There were dozens of polls, from ABC to Zogby, and, psychographic sophistication aside, they didn’t always exactly agree. For example, in Nevada during the last week of October, one poll put Obama’s lead at 12%, another at 7%, another at 5% and two others at 4%, which meant that, given the margin of sampling error, McCain could conceivably have been slightly ahead. This, then, was the last presidential election. In the future, you' ll only need to vote for the pollster that you trust the most.

During the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago, I was among 15,000 protesters who had gathered in Grant Park for a rally when the police, triggered by the actions of one of their own provocateurs, attacked the demonstrators and sadistically beat as many as they could reach. It seemed impossible that we could ever work within the system. But now, forty years later, there were 200,000 celebrants who had gathered in that same park, giddy with the excitement of Obama' s victory. They had worked within the system.

During the past four decades, there has been a linear progression from Jimi Hendrix playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" at Woodstock to Aretha Franklin singing "My Country, ' tis of Thee" at the inauguration. Is it possible that this event signified the early tremors of a nonviolent revolution? As the late singer/songwriter Harry Chapin once said to me backstage at a benefit: "If you don' t act like there' s hope, there *is* no hope." And remember, placebos work. My hope is I don' t get disappointed. [But I did.]

Meanwhile, the memorabilia business flourishes as millions of voters seek a variety of tangible items to remind them of the part they played in history simply by voting. Mouse pads, baby bibs, aprons, dog jerseys, bobble-heads, niche buttons (“Ventriloquists for Obama”), T-shirts (“Now I Don’ t Have to Move to Canada”) and, as reported by NPR, Obama condoms. Somebody bid $400 on eBay for the November 5th issue of the *New York Times*. *USA Today* printed 500,000 extra copies; the *Washington Post* printed 350,000 extras. The only thing I saved was a full-page ad by the 99 Cents Only stores, which included a “Joe the Plumber Special” plunger. There was no limit on how many I could buy.

A Letter to Barack Obama

October 10, 2010

Dear President Obama,

It seems that the theme emanating from the White House is "Eat, Pray, Be Disappointed." And yet, whenever I do feel disappointed, I always realize that the alternative was John McCain, with Sarah Palin just one Halloween "Boo!" away from the presidency, and then I always feel a sense of relief.

Actually, you've kept one big campaign promise--to send more troops to Afghanistan--so I guess we can't fault you for that. In fact, according to Bob Woodward in *Obama's Wars*, all you want to do now is get *out* of Afghanistan. Well, why don't you just do what Osama bin Laden did; cross over to Pakistan. Since we bribe Pakistan to be our ally, you'd think they would never consider harboring bin Laden, though they reek with empathy when our outsourced drones drop those bombs.

Also, during the campaign, you said you believe that the legality of same-sex marriage should be decided by the states, but that you personally think marriage should be between a man and a woman. Which is exactly the position that eventually led to the revocation of Carrie

Prejean’s Miss USA crown. And another thing. You promised to end the raids on medical marijuana dispensaries, but they haven’t stopped.

[In 2009, Attorney General Eric Holder issued a memo ordering an end to federal raids of medical marijuana dispensaries. In March 2011, there were 28 such raids in a duration of 24 hours.]

Here’s how I understand Washington. America’s puritanical political process serves as a buffer between the status quo and the force of evolution. For instance, in order to get Republican votes for the children’s healthcare bill, Democrats agreed to fund $28 million to *their* abstinence-only program.

And, during your own campaign, you admitted, in the context of health care reform, that the multinational insurance conglomeration is so firmly entrenched that you would be unable to dispense with it. So there would have to be compromises. Now, what with the compromises made to help passage of Prop. 19, amnesty becomes the single-payer system of marijuana reform, and growing your own pot becomes the public option. Meanwhile, as long as any government can arbitrarily decide which drugs are legal and which drugs are illegal, then anyone serving time for a nonviolent drug offense is a political prisoner.

In his new book, Bob Woodward writes about Colin Powell’s status as an adviser to you. Referring to his previous book, *Plan of Attack*, the *New York Times* then reported that “Secretary of State Colin Powell disputed Woodward’s account....He said that he had an excellent relationship with Vice President Dick Cheney, and that he did not recall referring to officials at the Pentagon loyal to Cheney as the ‘Gestapo office.’” Who among us would be unable to recall uttering such an epithet? Powell later apologized for it. He has also changed his mind about gays in the military. In my capacity as a stand-up satirist, I used to conduct an imaginary dialogue with Powell.

“General Powell, you’re the first African-American to be head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and you come from the tradition of a military family. So you know that blacks were once segregated in the Army because the other soldiers might feel uncomfortable if blacks slept in the same barracks. And now that’s what they say about gays, that other soldiers might feel uncomfortable about *gays* sleeping in the same barracks.”

“Well, you have to understand, we never *told* anybody we were black.”

And, Mr. President, that was the forerunner of the same “Don’t ask, don’t tell” policy that you promised to rescind, only you haven’t been acting like a Commander-in-Chief. All you have to do is sign such a directive. Those who serve in the military are trained to follow orders. If they can follow orders to kill fellow humans, they can certainly follow orders to treat openly gay service people with total equality.

Not only is the current guideline counterproductive, but also this display of trickle-down immorality must, on some level of consciousness, serve as a contributing factor to enabling the anti-gay bullying and torturing of innocent victims. I know, you don’t want to take a chance that retracting the policy would interfere with your re-election. You’ve made the point that you don’t want Mitt Romney to win in 2012 and turn around all the good things you’ve accomplished.

Incidentally, Romney had wanted to overturn Roe *vs.* Wade, yet, in 1994, when he was running for the Senate, he came out in *favor* of choice for women. However, freelance journalist Suzan Mazur revealed that he admitted to Mormon feminist Judith Dushku that “the Brethren” in Salt Lake City *told* him he could take a pro-choice position, and that in fact he probably *had* to in order to win in a liberal state like Massachusetts. Pandering trumps religious belief.

Meantime, since gays and lesbians have waited so long for basic fairness, they might as well just wait for the next election. If you win, then would you kindly do immediately what you believe is right, constitutionally and in your heart, and end this injustice? The ultimate irony is that gays in the military are fighting, being maimed and dying unnecessarily, supposedly to protect the freedom their own country is denying them.

Sincerely,
Paul Krassner

Postscript:

I sent a copy of the letter to some folks that day. Among the responses, I received a message from a mother: “I am trying to explain this to my twelve-year-old son, who wants to know why, if men and women don’t share barracks in the military, why gay men and hetero men should share barracks, but then follows with ‘They should all sleep in the same place.’ ”

And that evening I received this email from a seasoned journalist: “I know it's late, but I cannot wait to ask if this letter is a spoof, or you've actually sent it to Obama. If it's a spoof and you've not sent it to him, would you like to? I've got his fax number and he's got a great sense of humor. May I have your permission to send this to him?”

“Absolutely.”

Two days later, to the dismay of Obama--who told a town hall meeting that he was restricted because the “Don’t ask, don’t tell” policy was written into law, adding, “This is not a situation where I can, by the stroke of a pen, end this policy” --he wanted Congress to repeal it after the November midterm election, but Federal Judge Virginia Phillips upset that timetable by issuing an immediate and permanent ban on what she considered to be unconstitutional. This ruling was not a spoof, though it was treated as one by an appeals court that set aside her injunction. In December 2010, Congress repealed the 17-year-old law.

Nor was it a spoof when Attorney General Holder—having been pressured by nine former DEA chiefs, plus the president of Mexico--warned that if Prop. 19 was passed, making California the first state to legalize pot, the federal government would not look the other way, as it has done with medical marijuana. Holder (who wouldn’t prosecute the Bush administration for promulgating torture) explained:

“Let me state clearly that the Department of Justice strongly opposes Proposition 19. If passed, this legislation will greatly complicate federal drug enforcement efforts to the detriment of our citizens. We will vigorously enforce the [law] against those individuals and organizations that possess, manufacture or distribute marijuana for recreational use, even if such activities are permitted under state law."

In a truly free society, the distinction of whether marijuana is used for medical or recreational purposes would be as irrelevant an excuse for discrimination as whether the sexual preference of gays and lesbians is innate or a matter of choice.

And so it came to pass that Barack Obama was re-elected. His opponent, Romney, fell to his knees and pleaded, "Oh, dear Lord, you promised that I would win. Why hast thou forsaken me?" And the voice of God boomed out, *"HEY, MITT, LISTEN--I WAS JUST FUCKIN' WITH YA . . ."*

Unsafe at Safeway

It was Steve Allen, and later Lenny Bruce, who said that "Comedy is tragedy plus time." But everything is accelerating. Even the rate of acceleration is accelerating. The time between tragedy and comedy gets shorter and shorter. The more horrible the news is, the more victims there are to involuntarily serve as setups for punchlines.

Reality has long been nipping at the heels of comedy, and it finally caught up. Example: On the same day that people were being burned alive in the fire at the Branch Davidian headquarters in Waco, Texas, Jay Leno did a joke in his *Tonight Show* monologue about there being two kinds of cult members there-- "regular and crispy."

Of course, events like the recent madman massacre outside a Safeway supermarket can be challenging. How could made-up humor possibly top the actual absurdity of mass murderer Jared Loughner asking his MySpace friends not to be mad at him. After all, he was merely planning to indiscriminately kill as many innocent human beings as he could, with democracy itself as collateral damage.

The night before Loughner committed his senseless slaughter, he had taken photos of himself posing with his gun while wearing a bright red G-string and displaying his naked ass. Satirist Harry Shearer observed that "The nightmare in Tucson is the inevitable result of a society where a mentally confused young man can purchase a red G-string anywhere at any time, and pose with it as he sees fit. Can't we all agree now to lower the temperature on underwear?"

Speaking of lowering the temperature, in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, editorial cartoonist Rob Rogers depicted the U.S. Civil Discourse Gun Shop where a customer is asking the clerk: "Do you have anything versatile enough to go from a campaign breakfast to a protest march to a Town Hall meeting?" And in the *Orlando Sentinal*, Dana Summers depicted another gun store featuring semi-automatic 31-clip weapons, where the clerk is explaining to a customer: "Say you have thirty-one burglars break into your house."

On the Monday following the tragic weekend, Jon Stewart was unable to find anything funny about it. Nor was Stephen Colbert, although he did present a montage of news clips with various explanations of Loughner's behavior, and the final one, from Fox News— "He is also being described as a left-wing political pothead" —managed to evoke laughter from the audience. And Rush Limbaugh called him a "marijuana junkie."

In October 2008, Loughner told an old friend, Bryce Tierney, that he wasn’ t going to smoke marijuana any more. Tierney never saw him smoke pot again, and was surprised at media reports that Loughner was rejected by the Army in 2009 for failing a drug test: “He was clean…I saw him after that continuously. He would not do it…After he quit, he was just off the wall." But Loughner did *not* fail a drug test that day at the processing station. Rather, he admitted on an application form that he had smoked marijuana “hundreds of times.” He didn’ t know that the military has an official maximum of times you can admit to smoking pot.

A journalist I know acknowledges that he tried to join the Air Force at the San Diego recruitment office, but, “When the subject of drugs came up, I figured, okay, I have long hair, I look maybe homeless, they're going to *know* I'm lying if I say I've always been straight. I'll say I've smoked pot seven or eight times--something ridiculously, embarrassingly low. Whatever it was, it was too high. The recruiter said. ‘You can't have smoked more than *five* times. Go away, kid. Maybe the Marines will take you.’ Two weeks later I was at the Sacramento recruitment office and I had the ‘magic number.’ I joined the Air Force. One of the stupider things I've done.”

Indeed, Chris Hedges wrote on *TruthDig*: “Power does not rest with the electorate. It does not reside with either of the two major political parties. It is not represented by the press. It is not arbitrated by a judiciary that protects us from predators. Power rests with corporations. And corporations gain very lucrative profits from war, even wars we have no chance of winning. All polite appeals to the formal systems of power will not end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We must physically obstruct the war machine or accept a role as its accomplice."

When it comes to bloodbaths, the only difference between such invisible corporations and Jared Loughner is that he did it face-to-face.

Obviously, Loughner is crazy, but not legally insane, because he knew right from wrong, as indicated by his expectation of life in prison or execution for his unspeakable crime. True, John Hinckley was crazy when he tried to assassinate Ronald Reagan—his motivation was to impress actress Jodie Foster so she would go out bowling with him--yet he was sentenced to serve *his* time in a mental hospital, including occasional outings with his parents, which resulted in public outrage and a weakening of the insanity defense.

Ironically, Hinckley came out for gun control, and Reagan came out against it.

The Yippies and the Occupiers

As a co-founder of the Yippies (Youth International Party)—known for demonstrating against the Vietnam War at the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago--I find myself comparing and contrasting the Yippies and the Occupy Wall Street protesters.

We had to perform stunts to get media coverage of our cause, so a group of us went to the New York Stock Exchange, upstairs to the balcony, and threw $200 worth of singles onto the floor below, watching the gang of manic brokers suddenly morph from yelling "Pork Bellies" into playing "Diving for Dollars." Then we held a press conference outside, explaining the connection between the capitalist system and the war.

Now, a particular placard, “Wall Street Is War Street,” gives me a sense of continuity. Other anonymous Occupier spokespersons carried posters proclaiming: “God Forbid We Have Sex & Smoke Pot. They Want Us to Grab Guns & Go to War!” “I am an immigrant. I came here to take your job. But you don’t have one.” “$96,000 for a BA in Hispanic transgender gay & lesbian studies and I can’t find work!” And a woman in a wheelchair: “Stand Up For *Your* Rights!”

By the sheer power of numbers without the necessity of stunts, the Occupiers have broadened public awareness about the economic injustice perpetuated by corporations without compassion conspiring with government corruption that has resulted in immeasurable suffering. The Yippies were a myth that became a reality. The Occupiers are a reality that became a myth. The spirit of nonviolent revolution is what connects them.

NPR waited until eleven days of Occupy Wall Street had passed before reporting its existence. The executive news editor explained that the Occupiers "did not involve large numbers of people" (actually, there were already several hundred), no "prominent people" showed up (thus ignoring Michael Moore and Susan Sarandon), the lack of "a great disruption" (the police pepper-spraying protesters trapped in a cage of orange netting finally met that need), "or an especially clear objective" (oh, right, like all those flip-floppy pandering politicians whose clear objective is to get elected).

The Occupiers appear to be a leaderless community—most likely, you can't name a single one; not yet, anyway—whereas Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin and I served as spokespeople for the Yippies. We had media contacts and knew how to speak in sound bytes. If we gave good quote, they gave free publicity for upcoming demonstrations. It was mutual manipulation.

Sample: A reporter asked me about the 1968 counter-convention we were planning, “Will you be staying in tents?” I replied, “Some of us will be intense. Others will be frivolous.”

During an interview with Abbie and me for the CBS Evening News, taped at his apartment, Abbie paraphrased Che Guevara and said, “I'm prepared to win or die.” However, that never got on the air. When the reporter asked me, “What do the Yippies actually plan to do in Chicago?” I smiled at her and said, “You think I'm gonna tell *you?*” That portion of my answer was used to end Walter Cronkite's segment on the Yippies, but my follow-up sentence-- “The first thing we're gonna do is put truth serum in the reporters' drinks” --was omitted. They had beaten me at my own game.

The Yippies were inspired by the Buddhist monk in Vietnam who set himself on fire in order to call attention to the war. The photo of that incident traveled around the globe, and I wore a lapel button which featured that flaming image. Similarly, in 2010, a street vendor in Tunisia refused to pay a police bribe, then immolated himself, which inspired a revolution there, and next in Egypt, spreading into Arab Spring, which ultimately inspired American Autumn in 2011.

Inspired by the Yippies attempt to levitate the Pentagon, pie-thrower Aron Kay wanted to get fellow Occupiers to levitate Wall Street. No interest. Likewise, inspired by the Yippies nomination of an actual pig named Pigasus for president, Michael Dare tried unsuccessfully to persuade fellow protesters at Occupy Seattle to carry out his notion that, "If corporations are people, let's run one for president." I offered myself as Secretary of Greed.

The evolution of technology has changed the way protests are organized and carried out. The Yippies had to use messy mimeograph machines to print out flyers that had to be stuffed into envelopes, addressed, stamped and mailed. The Internet generally—and social media such as Facebook and Twitter—have enabled Occupiers to inexpensively reach countless people immediately.

When the Yippies were being tear-gassed, and beaten sadistically and indiscriminately, we chanted, "The whole world is watching!" But now, when a bloodbath was expected to happen if the New York police forced the Occupiers out of the park—and then that didn't happen—Michael Moore asked a cop, “Why don’t you think the eviction happened?” The reply: “Because the mayor’s afraid of YouTube.”

(One month later, Mayor Bloomberg apparently lost that fear; by his order, the eviction happened at 1 a.m. The next afternoon, a protester, before being allowed back in, was overheard remarking, “The cops have occupied Zuccotti Park. We're just trying to figure out what their demands are.")

Not only what occurred in Chicago in 1968 was officially labeled “a police riot” by a government-sponsored investigation, but also an undercover police provocateur—who was disguised as a local biker and acted as Jerry Rubin’s bodyguard—would ultimately state that he participated in pulling down the American flag in Grant Park, destroying it, then running up the black flag of the Viet Cong in its place.

“I joined in the chants and taunts against the police,” he said, “and provoked them to hitting me with their clubs. They didn’t know who I was, but they did know that I had called them names and struck them with one or more weapons.”

Now, as the Occupy model has spread around the country, police brutality has increased, and it’s not surprising that there have been accusations of provocateurs sabotaging the nonviolent principle, not to mention an assistant editor at a conservative magazine who infiltrated a group of protesters in Washington, D.C., later claiming that his purpose was "to mock and undermine them in the pages of the *American Spectator,*" and that he helped incite a riot at the National Air and Space Museum, getting pepper-sprayed in the process.

Moreover, a document from the Houston FBI revealed their plan "to engage in sniper attacks" and "kill the leadership" of the Occupy activists "if deemed necessary."

The Yippies were essentially countercultural, an amalgam of radicalized stoned hippies and straight political activists. And, although the Occupiers are essentially mainstream, their demonization by right-wing media pundits has been providing a repeat performance of neutralizing a progressive cause.

Bill O'Reilly called the Occupiers "drug-trafficking crackheads" and "violent America-hating anarchists." Sean Hannity said they "sound like skinhead Nazi psychos." Ann Coulter referred to them as mobs of "teenage runaways" and "tattooed, body–pierced, sunken-chested 19-year-olds getting in fights with the police for fun." Glenn Beck warned that they "will come for you and drag you into the streets and kill you."

Andrew Breitbart declared that Occupy Wall Street is "a group of public masturbating violent freaks."

And Rush Limbaugh labeled them "dumbed down" and "propagandized" and asked a rhetorical question reeking with layers of irony: "Whatever happened to the ' 60s--*Question Authority*?" At this point, Limbaugh is like a castrated canine that is still busy humping the living-room sofa by force of habit.

PORN AGAIN

Remembering Pubic Hair

Okay, call me old-fashioned, but I still like pubic hair. Internet porn sites now present several choices--completely shaved, vertical landing strips that look like exclamation points, heart shaped, the Charlie Chaplin with just a little patch above the clitoris, and a tiny triangle that serves as an arrow *pointing* to the clit--yet, for a full bush, one would have to search the Web for “hairy” sites that are considered as “specialty,” “kinky” or “fetish.”

Retired porn stars have commented on this phenomenon. Gina Rome, retired after six years, shaved every day. “It was part of getting ready for work.” When she switched from acting to film editing, she stopped shaving and let her pubic hair grow out. “Shaving was work. I don’t have to do it any more, so I don’t.” And Kelly Nichols says, “I was a *Penthouse* model in the early 1980s, and I posed with a full bush. No one in adult entertainment shaved back then. Now everybody does.”

Although Martha Stewart is back on TV, you can be sure that she’ll never give any suggestions on what to do about those big red razor bumps that result from shaving your vagina, so here’s a helpful hint I’d like to pass along--they can be largely eliminated with, of all things, Visine eye drops. But pubic hair is practical; serves as a cushion against friction.

The porn industry has played an important part in shaping pubic styles. Jordan Stein writes in an article titled *Has Porn Gone Mainstream?:* "Consider the near icon status the female porn star has achieved. She is so mainstream that even good girls are imitating her various styles of undress, disappearing hair and all. Porn chic? You bet."

However, Julia Baird writes in *Celebrity Porn*: "The idea that the fashion industry can strip, then exhibit women in the name of 'porn chic,' is a bit silly, frankly. But 'flesh is the new fabric' could be the new catch-cry. Americans call their bush George W. It's fashionable--the curious fact is that it is fueled by the porn aesthetic that celebrities love to love."

Among Hollywood actresses, Gwyneth Paltrow and Kirstie Alley have both admitted favoring Brazilian wax jobs, where most of their pubic hair is removed, leaving a small tuft that remains hidden under a thong bikini. Sara Jessica Parker's character, Carrie Bradshaw, had her pubic hair removed during the third season of *Sex In the City*. Presumably, it's now in the Smithsonian museum along with Archie Bunker's easy chair and the Fonz's leather jacket.

On ABC’s *Women’s Murder Club*, a medical examiner directs her gaze to the crotch of a female corpse and says, “That’s not your mama’s bikini wax.” On *The View*, Joy Behar said, “No pubic hair creates a wind tunnel.” And in a hysterical episode of HBO’s dark comedy series, *Curb Your Enthusiasm,* former *Seinfeld* producer Larry David performed oral sex on his wife, and in the process he sort of swallowed one of her pubic hairs. The next day, he was still choking on it, like a cat trying to get rid of a hairball.

A psychologist at Harvard Medical School and author of *Survival of the Prettiest: The Science of Beauty*, Nancy Etcoff, writes that “There’s also an erotic, sexual component to hairlessness because your skin is more sensitive when it’s more exposed. Women today are emulating porn stars who have no pubic hair, and I think men like it.”

My own resistance to the plethora of bald pussies stems from my pre-adolescent days when pubic hair was such a big taboo that I became obsessed with it. In those pre-bikini days, I would go to Coney Island and stroll around the sand, sneaking glances at ladies in the hope of finding a few stray curlicues of forbidden pubic hair peeking out from their various and sun-dried crotches. And if I was able to discover any, why, it felt as though I had experienced a really productive afternoon.

Betty Dodson, sex educator and producer of *Viva La Vulva*, says, “I think we have changing ideas about what’s public and what’s private. And now that nudity is more public--nude beaches, routine nudity in film, and the enormous amount of exhibitionism and porn on the Web--I’m not surprised to see a trend toward pubic shaving. I think it’s probably here to stay.” She told me that, “Thanks to the lack of a comprehensive sex education for kids, young girls now want their vulvas to look like porn stars because that's what their boyfriends jerk off to and prefer. It's all they know.” But a new study has concluded that pubic hair is returning: “The men don’t care and the women don’t can’t bother.”

Welcome back, good old bush. Hide and seek a friendly clit.

Ironically, although Arnold Schwarzenegger was only joking when he announced that *he* was going to get a Bikini wax, actually Beverly Hills skin care and waxing expert Nance Mitchell has about fifty regular male customers that come for pubic waxing who “are not gay and they are not porn stars. Some go totally bare, some just do the shaft and up around the pelvic area.” She explains that “It depends on what their wives and girlfriends want. Men go along because removing the hair makes the whole package look bigger.”

Ah, yes, the *illusion* of size does matter.

The Taste of Sperm

Online sexology columnist Sandor Gardos was asked, “How do I increase the amount of my ejaculate? I’ve noticed porn stars seem to ejaculate copious amounts of fluid, and I’d like to be able to wow my partner.” Dr. Gardos points out that “the actors in porn films are professionals. Even they often don’t ejaculate that much--sometimes movie makers will supplement with synthetic semen shot from a small tube.”

Well, I’m just shocked to realize that somewhere in America there must be a group of scientists in a laboratory who earn their salaries by manufacturing fake semen.

Meanwhile, ManNotIncluded.com has become the first cyberspace sperm bank for lesbians and single women who want to become pregnant. They are matched with anonymous donors who have the desired race, eye color, height and weight, then sent instructions on how to inseminate themselves. John Gonzalez, founder of the website, hopes this service will overcome the hurdles presented by bureaucracies and fertility clinics who are prejudiced against same-sex couples.

"Lesbians hook up with gay men all the time," he says, "either friends or guys they've met through personal ads. We are now simply allowing them to do so safely and without discrimination."

On the other hand, in the movie, *Sarah Silverman: Jesus Is Magic*--a performance by one of the best and raunchiest female stand-up comedians--she describes a sure method of birth control: "coming all over her face." Of course, that punchline is derived from the ever popular image on Internet porn sites, where I look in vain for the small print with messages warning, "Do Not Try This Particular Money Shot At Home" and "This Is Not Exactly What She Means When She Says She'd Like To Get a Facial For Her Birthday."

Furthermore, in Chelsea, Michigan, Book Crafters has refused to print *Baboon Dooley, Rock Critic*, a collection of John Crawford's comic strip, because his protagonist accidentally drinks from a glass of semen. He spits it out upon learning the content, only to be called a sexist, and challenged: "You'd expect a *woman* to drink it, right?" However, on CNN, author Hugh Prather was a guest, and the subject was couples. A caller revealed his problem: "The trouble is, when I come in her mouth, she can't really swallow it all." The anchor quickly hung up on this premature ejaculation.

Cartoonist Mary Lawton depicted a character saying, “I just found out that alfalfa sprouts smell like sperm. Does this mean I should practice safe salad?” Yet humorist Jacqueline Shtuyote tells me that “Sperm is basically tasteless. The truth should be out about this. Men seem to think that their white stuff is a culinary delight, yet I know of no culinary courses extolling the flavor of sperm. And if, as rumored, Jack-in-the-Box cooks occasionally spill their cum on an irritating customer’s hamburger, how many of us would be pleased with the added ingredient?

“Why can’t we find something that changes the flavor of cum? Then men could squirt red stuff that is raspberry flavored, or brown stuff that is chocolate flavored. Shy women could finally delight in swallowing their lover’s cum. No sperm would ever be spit out again. There could be a pill to make cum taste like fast-food hamburgers. Maybe then we wouldn’t mind if we found out that the secret sauce on top of Jack-in-the-Box hamburgers is, after all, sperm.”

But let’s not forget those who don’t eat meat. They face an ethical dilemma--whether or not it’s an acceptable practice for a vegetarian to give a blow job, and if so, is it all right to swallow? The general practice is that, yes, it’s definitely okay to give a blow job because no animal is harmed in the process. And, yes, it’s also okay to ingest the sperm because it’s a good source of protein, something that’s often lacking when meat is removed from the diet.

Finally--and this could possibly be an urban legend--in a biology class at Harvard University, a professor was discussing the high glucose levels found in semen which give the spermatozoa all that energy for their journey. A female freshman raised her hand and asked, “If I understand you correctly, you’re saying there is a lot of glucose, as in sugar, in semen?”

“That’s correct,” replied the professor.

The student asked, “Then why doesn’t it taste sweet?”

“It doesn’t taste sweet,” he answered as she realized what her question implied. She blushed, picked up her books and headed for the door, as he continued, “because the taste buds for sweetness are on the tip of your tongue and not the back of your throat. Have a good day.”

Eating Shit for Fun and Profit

I am in complete awe of the democracy of the Internet, which presents an infinite menu for individual tastes and ideologies, and in this context, specifically to viewers of online pornography. From golden showers to farm animals, the World Wide Web caters to virtually every imaginable desire. With the privacy provided by a computer screen, you can worship at the fetish of your choice. But, in the process of surfing porn sites—for research purposes only, of course—I realized that I had never come across a site specializing in coprophagia. It means eating shit. Literally.

There's an old saying among nutritionists: "You are what you eat." However, comedian Darryl Henriques, playing the role of a New Age swami, says, "You are what you don't shit."

One of the nastiest things you can say to someone is, "Eat shit." A nonfiction book, *The Pit*, reveals a strange cult in San Francisco where a group of successful businessmen were forced, along with other acts of humiliation, to eat their own shit. Ultimately, they were represented in a lawsuit by flamboyant attorney Melvin Belli. But that was more-or-less involuntary shit eating, and what we’re talking about here is the voluntary kind.

For many years I heard stories that comic actor Danny Thomas, the star of *Make Room for Daddy*, was a coprophagiac. I assumed it was just another urban legend until I bumped into an old friend who was now working as a prostitute in Hollywood. Over lunch, she mentioned the names of some of her celebrity clients, including Danny Thomas. She told me how he had hired her to save her solid waste in her panties so that he could rub those panties on his face and gobble up her shit as though it were cotton candy.

When he finished, he would wash his hands and face thoroughly then pay her and, as if coming out of a trance, he’d say, “Where was I?” He was trying to distance himself from what he had just done. Instant denial. Since then, I have believed that Danny Thomas’s fundraising for Saint Jude’s Hospital was really for the purpose of having secret access to their bedpans.

Anyway, I googled “eating shit.” Topping the list was “Shit Eating Grins: In Defense of Adam Sandler.” But sure enough, I was soon led to hardcore shit-eating sites, which I found totally disgusting, yet absolutely riveting. You may not want to read any further, but we both know you will.

There are photos of beautiful women shitting. If you click for a close-up you can spot a yellow kernel of corn in one big brown chunk o’ shit. Women are spreading shit all over their naked bodies and inside their vaginas. A pair of lovely lesbians are eating handfuls of shit, then tongue kissing each other. Two women are eating the same lengthy turd, starting from opposite ends. A woman, fully dressed, wearing a mini-skirt, is shitting as she walks along the sidewalk. One woman is shitting into another woman’s mouth. Mmmm, good to the last dingleberry.

Among the shit-eating sites, there are Asian movies. Here’s a couple of descriptions: “A bunch of kinky Japanese guys find some truly hot looking girls and take them down below the streets of Tokyo into a real sewer full of shit.” And “Cute Kyoko’s diarrhea suddenly acts up again. Her piano teacher becomes a willing student of hot scat games. Lots of shit pours out of her hot ass into his waiting mouth. Then she asks if he would rub it all over her. ‘Sure, why not,’ he says.”

If there is one particular image that remains in my mind’s eye, it is an innocent-looking, attractive teenager—she’s over 18, of course—and she is cheerfully drinking a shit shake through a straw in an old-fashioned, malted-milk glass.

I thought about her father discovering that video in cyberspace, yet he is unable to confront his daughter about it because he would then have to admit what *he* was doing at that site. I mean, this isn’t exactly the type of thing that would be mass emailed by one of those selfless spammers, is it? And even if the father did confess to his daughter, he would undoubtedly hesitate to ask if he could eat *her* shit, because that could be considered a form of incest, and you have to draw the line somewhere, right?

There must be an especially strong bond among coprophagiacs, though, because they have experienced in common a form of liberation from a taboo that can be traced all the way back to infancy, when a parent would cringe and say, “Stop! Don’t eat that! I said *no!*”

Who knows, some day coprophagia might even become a religion?

Holy shit!

“I Fuck Dead People”

You don’t see many porn sites that feature intercourse with corpses, and if you do, how do you know they’re really dead? But, say what you will about California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, you have to give him credit for signing a bill to forbid necrophilia. Under the new law, sex with a corpse is now a felony punishable by up to eight years in prison.

Age is no barrier. The state’s first attempt to outlaw necrophilia--in response to a case of a man charged with having sex with the corpse of a 4-year-old girl in Southern California---stalled in a legislative committee, but the bill was revived after an unsuccessful prosecution of a man who was found in a San Francisco funeral home, passed out on top of an elderly woman’s corpse.

Necrophiliacs have been getting away with it all this time, but district attorneys will no longer be stymied by the lack of an official ban. According to Tyler Ochoa, a professor at Santa Clara University of Law who has studied California cases involving allegations of necrophilia, “Prosecutors didn’t have anything to charge these people with other than breaking and entering. But if they worked in a mortuary in the first place, prosecutors couldn’t even charge them with that.”

Whether necrophilia is a victimless crime may still be open to debate. Nevertheless, claiming that the act was consensual will not be considered as a legal defense. It should be noted that the necrophilia community ranges from those who are monogamous and stick with one partner for a lifetime, to those who are promiscuous and hop from casket to casket.

According to his own journal entry, Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of the most revered figures in American literary history, was so devastated by the death of his young wife, Ellen, that, shortly after her burial, he went out to the cemetery one night and dug up her corpse, though he didn' t mention exactly what he did with it.

One of the most popular episodes of the police TV show, *Homicide, Life On the Streets*, was about the investigation of an old lonely widower, a mortician, who used to party with the corpses, setting them around a table as if they were alive. They investigated him because he shot a neighbor who knew about this practice, and then sat in the garden and waited for the cops. But again, the mortician' s relationship with those corpses may have been purely platonic.

Let us now eavesdrop on the dialogue of a few participants in an Internet support group, Necrophiliacs Anonymous:

"Obviously, neither a corpse nor a 4-year-old can provide consent, but if you leave permission in your will for your lonesome spouse or significant other to have one last fling with your mortal coil, shouldn't the state of California respect your wishes?"

"I still think that organ donation is a better cause. It's just that I believe the only offense here is really violation of private property. I wonder if someone gives their partner, in a will, the right to have sex with their body after their death, will it be legal?"

"Or, even without that permission, if you are an only heir of somebody, doesn't it mean their body belongs to you? It sounds gross, but isn't it an issue of private rights in the United States of America, that likes so much the idea of individualism and is ready to exploit people and the environment in the name of that ideal?"

"I never understood why people think that having sex with a dead body is worse than raping a living person. To me, that's the worst kind, and then raping poor helpless animals. I really couldn't care less about my *own* dead body."

Conversely, Sam Kinison, the late evangelist who turned into a comedian, had a great routine about necrophilia: "Well, that's it, man--I'm dead. Nothing else bad can happen to me now. Wait a minute--

what’ s that? What’ s this guy doing? What’ s going on here? [*Screams*] Oh oh oh oh oh OH OH OH OH OH *OOOOOOHHHHHH NOOOOOOO!!! Live in Hell!!!”*

The majority of cannibalistic serial killers are motivated by a kind of necrophilia--it’ s usually a highly sexually arousing experience for them when they eat their victims. Here, from my “Great Moments in Necrophilia” file, is a dispatch from Associated Press:

“The prosecution in the insanity trial of serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer rested its case. Dahmer has confessed to killing and dismembering 17 young males since 1978. A jury must decide if he will be sent to prison or a mental institution. The final prosecution witness, Dr. Park Dietz, a psychiatrist, testified that Dahmer wore condoms when having sex with his dead victims, showing that he could control his urge to have intercourse with corpses.”

I smell a public service announcement there: “If Jeffrey Dahmer is sane enough to have safe sex, what about *you*?”

COMEDIANS

Remembering Lenny Bruce

August 3rd, 2016 marked the 50th anniversary of groundbreaking comedian Lenny Bruce’ s death from an overdose of morphine, while his New York obscenity conviction at Café Au Go Go was still on appeal. On that same day he received a foreclosure notice at his Los Angeles home.

But it wasn’ t a suicide. In the kitchen, a kettle of water was still boiling, and in his office, the electric typewriter was still humming. He had stopped typing in mid-word: “Conspiracy to interfere with the 4th Amendment const” ...constitutes what, I wondered.

Lenny was a subscriber to my satirical magazine, *The Realist,* and in 1959 we met for the first time at the funky Hotel America in Times Square. He was amazed that I got away with publishing those profane words for which other periodicals used asterisks or dashes. He had been using euphemisms like “frig” and asked, “Are you telling me this is legal to sell on the newsstands?”

I replied, “The Supreme Court's definition of obscenity is that it has to be material which appeals to your prurient interest.” He magically produced an unabridged dictionary from the suitcase on his bed, and looked up the word “prurient.” He closed the dictionary, clenching his jaw and nodding his head in affirmation of a new discovery. “So,” he observed, “it’s against the law to get you horny.”

When we were about to leave the room, he stood in the doorway. “Did you steal anything?” he asked furtively. I took my watch out of my pocket since I didn't like to wear it on my wrist, and without saying a word I placed it on the bureau. Lenny laughed one loud staccato “Ha” and kissed me on the forehead.

We developed a friendship integrated with stand-up comedy. In his act Lenny had broken through traditional stereotypical jokes about airplane food, nagging wives, Chinese drivers, annoying mothers-in-law. Instead he weaved his taboo-breaking targets--teachers' low salaries *versus* show-business celebs, religious leaders’ hypocrisy, cruel abortion laws, racial injustice, the double standard between illegal and prescription drugs--into stream-of-consciousness vignettes.

In each succeeding performance, he would sculpt and re-sculpt his concept into a theatrical context, experimenting from show to show like a verbal jazz musician. Audience laughter would sometimes turn into clapping for the creative process itself. “Please don't applaud,” he’d request. “It breaks my rhythm.”

Lenny was writing an autobiography--*How to Talk Dirty and Influence People*--which *Playboy* planned to serialize, then publish as a book, and they hired me as his editor. We met in Atlantic City, where he was taking Delaudid for lethargy, and he sent a telegram to a contact, with a phrase--DE LAWD IN DE SKY--as a code to send a doctor's prescription.

At a certain point he was acting paranoid and demanded that I take a lie-detector test, and I was paranoid enough to take him literally. I couldn't work with him if he didn't trust me. We got into an argument, and I left.

He sent a telegram that sounded like we were on the verge of divorce. “WHY CAN'T IT BE THE WAY IT USED TO BE?” he wrote. I agreed to try again, and in 1962 I flew to Chicago. Lenny was performing at the Gate of Horn, where he was asking the whole audience to take a lie-detector test.

Lenny was intrigued by the implications of an item in *The Realist,* an actual statement by Adolf Eichmann that he would have been “not only a scoundrel, but a despicable pig” if he hadn't carried out Hitler's orders. Lenny wrote a piece for *The Realist,* “Letter From a Soldier's Wife,” namely Mrs. Eichmann pleading for compassion to spare her husband's life.

Lenny had been reading a study of anti-Semitism by Jean-Paul Sartre. Now, on stage, giving credit to Thomas Merton's poem about the Holocaust, he requested that all the lights go off except one dim blue spot. Then he began speaking with a German accent:

> My name is Adolf Eichmann. And the Jews came every day to what they thought would be fun in the showers. People say I should have been hung. *Nein*. Do you recognize the whore in the middle of you–that you would have done the same if you were there yourselves? My defense: I was a soldier. I saw the end of a conscientious day's effort. I watched through the portholes. I saw every Jew burned and turned into soap.
>
> Do you people think yourselves better because you burned your enemies at long distance with missiles without ever seeing what you had done to them? Hiroshima *auf Wiedersehen*. [*German accent ends*.] If we would have lost the war, they would have strung Truman up by the balls, Jim. Are you kidding with that? Not what kid told kid told kid. They would just *schlep* out all those Japanese mutants. “Here they did; there they are.” And Truman said they'd do it again. That's what they should have the same day as Remember Pearl Harbor. Play them in unison.

Lenny was arrested for obscenity that night. One of the items in the Chicago police report complained: “Then talking about the war he stated, ‘If we would have lost the war, they would have strung Truman up by the balls.’ ” The cops also broke open Lenny's candy bars, looking for drugs. They checked the IDs of audience members, including George Carlin, who told the cops, “I don’t believe in IDs.” Then they arrested him for disorderly conduct, dragged him along by the seat of his pants and hoisted him into the police wagon.

“What are you doing here?” Lenny asked.

“I didn’t want to show them my ID.”

“You schmuck.”

Lenny was released on bail, but the head of the Vice Squad warned the Gate of Horn manager: “If this man ever uses a four-letter word in this club again, I'm going to pinch you and everyone in here. If he ever speaks against religion, I'm going to pinch you and everyone in here. Do you understand? You've had good people here. But he mocks the pope--and I'm speaking as a Catholic--I'm here to tell you your license is in danger. We're going to have someone here watching every show.”

And indeed, the Gate of Horn's liquor license was suspended. There were no previous allegations against the club, and the current charge involved neither violence nor drunken behavior. The only charge pressed by the city prosecutor was Lenny Bruce's allegedly obscene performance. Nobody’s prurience was aroused, but that made no difference. After all, there wasn’t any law against blasphemy.

“Chicago is so corrupt, it’s thrilling,” Lenny said.

Chicago had the largest membership in the Roman Catholic Church of any archdiocese in the country. Lenny's jury consisted entirely of Catholics. The judge was Catholic. The prosecutor and his assistant were

Catholic. On Ash Wednesday, the judge removed the spot of ash from his forehead and told the bailiff to instruct the others to do likewise. The sight of a judge, two prosecutors and twelve jurors, every one with a spot of ash on their foreheads, would have all the surrealistic flavor of a Lenny Bruce fantasy.

Since he often talked on stage about his environment, and since police cars and courtrooms had become his environment, the content of Lenny's performances began to revolve more and more around the inequities of the legal system. “In the Halls of Justice,” he declared, “the only justice is in the halls.” But he also said, “I love the law.” Instead of an unabridged dictionary, he now carried law books in his suitcase. His room was cluttered with tapes and transcripts and photostats and law journals and legal briefs.

Once he was teasing his ten-year-old daughter, Kitty, by pretending not to believe what she was telling him. “Daddy,” she said, “you'd believe me if it was on tape.”

Lenny's jazz jargon was gradually being replaced by legal jargon. He had become intimate not only with the statutes concerning obscenity and narcotics but also with courtroom procedure, and his knowledge would be woven into his performances. But as clubs became increasingly afraid to hire him, he devoted more and more time and energy to the law.

In less than two years, Lenny was arrested 15 times. Club owners were afraid to book him. He couldn’t get a gig in six months. On a Christmas day, he was alone in his hotel room, and I brought him a $500 bill. With a large safety pin, he attached it to his denim jacket. When he finally got a booking in Monterey, he admitted, “I feel like it's taking me away from my work.”

Lenny lived way up in the hills. His house was protected by barbed wire and a concrete gate, except that it was always open. He had a wall-to-wall one-way mirror in his living room, but when the sun was shining you could see into the room instead of out. He was occasionally hassled by police on his own property. One evening in October 1963, we were talking while he was shaving, when four officers suddenly appeared, loud and obnoxious. He asked them to leave unless they had a search warrant.

One of the cops took out his gun. “Here's my search warrant,” he said. Then Lenny and the cops had a discussion about the law, such as the rules of evidence, and after half an hour they left. Lenny tried to take it all in stride, but the encounter was depressing, and he changed his mind about going out that night.

When everything was quiet, we went outside and stood at the edge of his unused swimming pool. Dead leaves floated in the water. Lenny cupped his hands to his mouth. "All right, you dogs," he called out. "Bark for the rich man!" --thereby setting off a chain reaction of barking dogs, a canine chorus echoing through Hollywood Hills.

We ordered some pizza, and he played some old tapes, ranging from a faith healer to patriotic World War II songs. "Good-bye, Mama, I'm off to Yokohama, the Land of Yama-Yama..."

Back at the Café Au Go Go arrest in New York, Lenny had told a fantasy tale about Eleanor Roosevelt, quoting her, "I've got the nicest tits that have ever been in this White House…" The top of the police complaint was "Eleanor Roosevelt and her display of tits." At the trial, Lenny acted as his own attorney. He had obtained the legislative history of an Albany statute, and he discovered that back in 1931 there was an amendment proposed, which excluded from arrest in an indecent performance: stagehands, spectators, musicians, and--here was the fulcrum of his defense--actors. The law had been misapplied to him. Despite opposition by the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, the amendment was finally signed into law by then-Governor Roosevelt, but to no avail.

"Ignoring the mandate of Franklin D. Roosevelt," Lenny observed, "is a great deal more offensive than saying Eleanor has lovely nay-nays."

On October 13, 1965 (Lenny's 40th birthday), instead of surrendering to the authorities in New York, he filed suit at the U.S. District Court in San Francisco to keep out of prison, and he got himself officially declared a pauper. Two months before his death in 1966, Lenny wrote to me: "I'm still working on the bust of the government of New York State." And he included his doodle of Christ nailed to a crucifix, with a speech balloon asking, "Where the hell is the ACLU?"

After he died, at a séance, his mother brought his old faded denim jacket. That large safety pin was still attached to it. And at the funeral, his sound engineer friend dropped Lenny's microphone into his grave before the dirt was piled on. Lenny's problem had been that he wanted to talk on stage with the same freedom that he had in his living room. That problem doesn't happen to stand-up comedians any more.

As for me, I'm working on my long awaited (by me) first novel. It's about a contemporary Lenny Bruce-type satirist. Those scenes where my protagonist performs, I've developed onstage myself, although at times it felt like I was actually channeling Lenny, until the day that he said, "C'mon, Paul, you know you don't believe in that shit.” Well, this ended *that* wishful-thinking delusion.

I told my friend Avery Corman--author of *Oh, God* and *Kramer vs. Kramer*-- how I welcomed the challenge of writing fiction.

“But, you know,” I added, “it’s really hard to write. You have to make everything up.”

And he said, “Hey, listen, you’ve been making stuff up all your life.”

“Yeah, but that was journalism.”

My Acid Trip With Groucho Marx

LSD was influencing music, painting, spirituality, and even the stock market. Tim Leary once let me listen in on a call from a Wall Street broker thanking him for turning him onto acid because it gave him the courage to sell short. Leary had a certain sense of pride about the famous folks he and his associates had introduced to the drug.

"But," he told me, "I consider Otto Preminger one of our failures."

I first met Preminger in 1960 while I was conducting a panel on censorship for *Playboy.* He had defied Hollywood's official seal of approval by refusing to change the script of *The Moon Is Blue*. He wouldn't take out the word *virgin*.

At the end of our interview, he asked, "Ven you tronscripe dis, vill you vix op my Henglish?"

"Oh, sure," I replied quickly. "Of course."

"Vy? Vot's drong viz my Henglish?"

I saw Preminger again in 1967. He was making a movie called *Skidoo*, starring Jackie Gleason as a retired criminal. Preminger told me he had originally intended that role for Frank Sinatra. *Skidoo* was pro-acid propaganda thinly disguised as a comedy adventure. However, LSD was not why the FBI was annoyed with the film. Rather, according to Gleason's FBI files, the FBI objected to one scene in the script where a file cabinet is stolen from an FBI building. Gleason was later approved as a special FBI contact in the entertainment business.

One of the characters in *Skidoo* was a Mafia chieftain named God. Screenwriter Bill Cannon had suggested Groucho Marx for the part. Preminger said it wasn't a good idea, but since they were already shooting, and that particular character was needed on the set in three days, Groucho would be playing God after all. During one scene, Preminger was screaming instructions at him. Groucho yelled back, “Are you drunk?”

I had dinner with him that evening. He was concerned about the script of *Skidoo* because it pretty much advocated LSD, which he had never tried, but he was curious. Moreover, he felt a certain responsibility to his young audience not to steer them wrong. He had read my descriptions of acid trips, so he asked if I could I possibly get him some pure stuff, and would I care to accompany him on a trip? I did not play hard to get. We arranged to ingest those little 300-microgram white tablets one afternoon at the home of an actress in Beverly Hills.

Groucho was especially interested in the countercultural aspects of LSD. I mentioned a couple of incidents that particularly tickled him, and his eyes sparkled with delight. One was about how, on Haight Street, runaway youngsters, refugees from their own families, had stood outside a special tourist bus–guided by a driver "trained in sociological significance" --and they held mirrors up to the cameras pointing at them from the windows, so that the tourists would get photos of themselves trying to take photos.

The other was about the day that LSD became illegal. In San Francisco, at precisely two o'clock in the afternoon, a cross-fertilization of mass protest and tribal celebration had taken place, as several hundred young people simultaneously swallowed tabs of acid while the police stood by helplessly

"Internal possession wasn't against the law," I explained to Groucho.

"And they trusted their friends more than they trusted the government," he said. "I like that."

We had a period of silence and a period of listening to music. I was accustomed to playing rock' n' roll while tripping, but the record collection at this house consisted entirely of classical music and Broadway show albums. First, we listened to the "Bach Cantata No. 7." "I'm supposed to be Jewish," Groucho said, "but I was seeing the most beautiful visions of Gothic cathedrals. Do you think Bach *knew* he was doing that?"

"I don't know. I was seeing beehives and honeycombs myself."

Later, we were listening to the score of a musical comedy, *Fanny*. There was one song called "Welcome Home," where the lyrics go something like, "Welcome home, says the clock," and the chair says, "Welcome home," and so do various other pieces of furniture. Groucho started acting out each line, as though he were actually *being* greeted by the clock, the chair, and the rest of the furniture. He was like a child, charmed by his own ability to respond to the music that way.

There was a bowl of fruit on the dining room table. During a snack, he said, "I never thought eating a nice juicy plum would be the biggest thrill of my life." Then we talked about the sexual revolution. Groucho asked, "Have you ever laid two ladies together?"

I told him about the time that I was being interviewed by a couple of students from a Catholic girls' school. Suddenly Sheila, *The Realist*'s "Scapegoat," and Marcia, the "Shit-On" --she had given herself that title because "What could be lower than a Scapegoat?" --walked out of their office totally nude. "Sorry to interrupt, Paul," said Sheila, "but it's

Wednesday--time for our weekly orgy.” The interviewers left in a hurry. Sheila and Marcia led me up the stairs to my loft bed, and we had a delicious threesome. It had never happened before, and it would never happen again.

At one point in our conversation, Groucho somehow got into a negative space. He was equally cynical about institutions, such as marriage-- “legal quicksand” --and individuals, such as Lyndon Johnson, referred to as “that potato-head.”

Eventually, I asked, “What gives you hope?”

He thought for a moment. Then he just said one word: “People.”

I told him about the sketch I had written for Steve Allen, “Unsung Heroes of Television,” with the man whose job it was on *You Bet Your Life* to wait for the secret word to be said so that he could drop the duck down, and Groucho told me about one of his favorite contestants on the show. “He was an elderly gentleman with white hair, but quite a chipper fellow. I asked him what he did to retain his sunny disposition. 'Well, I'll tell you, Groucho,’ he says, 'every morning I get up and I *make a choice* to be happy that day.'”

Groucho was holding onto his cigar for a long time, but he never smoked it, he only sniffed it occasionally. “Everybody has their own Laurel and Hardy," he mused. "A miniature Laurel and Hardy, one on each shoulder. Your little Oliver Hardy bawls you out--he says, 'Well, this is a *fine mess* you've gotten us into.' And your little Stan Laurel gets all weepy–--Oh, Ollie, I couldn't help it. I'm sorry, I did the best I could.' "

Later, when Groucho started chuckling to himself, I hesitated to interrupt his reverie, but I had to ask, "What struck you funny?"

"I was thinking about this movie, *Skidoo*," he said. "I mean some of it is just plain ridiculous. This hippie inmate puts a letter he got, which is soaked in LSD, into the water supply of the prison, and suddenly everybody gets completely reformed. There's a prisoner who says, 'Oh, gosh, now I don't have to be a rapist any more!' But it's also sophisticated in its own way. I like how Jackie Gleason, the character he plays, *accepts* the fact that he's not the biological father of his daughter."

"Oh, really? That sounds like the ultimate ego loss."

"But I'm really getting a big kick out of playing somebody named God like a dirty old man. You wanna know why?"

"Typecasting?"

"No, no--it's because--do you realize that irreverence and reverence are the *same thing?*"

"Always?"

"If they're not, then it's a misuse of your power to make people laugh." His eyes began to tear. "That's funny. I'm not even sad." Then he went to urinate, and when he came back, he said, "You know, everybody is waiting for *miracles* to happen. But the whole *human body* is a goddamn miracle." He recalled Otto Preminger telling him about his own response to taking LSD and then he mimicked Preminger's accent: "I saw *tings*, bot I did not zee myself." Groucho was looking in a mirror on the dining room wall, and he said, "Well, I can see *my*self, but I still don't understand what the hell I'm *doing* here . . ."

A week later, Groucho told me that members of the Hog Farm commune who were extras in the movie had turned him on with marijuana on the set of *Skidoo*. "You know," I said, "my mother once warned me that LSD would lead to pot." "Well," he said, " your mother was right."

When *Skidoo* was released, Tim Leary saw it, and he cheerfully admitted, "I was fooled by Otto Preminger. He's much hipper than me."

In 1971, during an interview with *Flash* magazine, Groucho said, "I think the only hope this country has is Nixon's assassination." Yet he wasn't subsequently arrested for threatening the life of a president. In view of the indictment against Black Panther David Hilliard for using similar rhetoric, I wrote to the Justice Department to find out the status of their case against Groucho, and received this reply:

> Dear Mr. Krassner:
>
> Responding to your inquiry, the Supreme Court has held that Title 18 U.S.C., Section 871, prohibits only "true" threats. It is one thing to say that "I (or *we*) will kill Richard Nixon" when you are the leader of an organization which advocates killing people and overthrowing the Government; it is quite another to utter the words which are attributed to Mr. Marx, an alleged comedian. It was the opinion of both myself and the United States Attorney in Los Angeles (where Marx's words were alleged to have been uttered) that the latter utterance did not constitute a "true" threat.
>
> Very Truly Yours,
> James L. Browning, Jr.
> United States Attorney

It would later be revealed that the FBI had published pamphlets in the name of the Black Panthers, advocating the killing of cops, and that an FBI file on Groucho Marx had indeed been started, and he actually *was* labeled a "national security risk." I phoned Groucho to tell him the good news.

"I deny everything," he said, "because I lie about everything." He paused, then added, "And everything I *deny* is a lie."

The last time I saw Groucho was in 1976. He was speaking at the Los Angeles Book Fair. He looked frail and unsmiling, but he was alert and irascible as ever. He took questions from the audience.

"Are you working on a film now?"

“No, I'm answering silly questions.”

“What are your favorite films?”

“*Duck Soup. Night at the Opera*."

“What do you think about Richard Nixon?”

“He should be in jail.”

“Is humor an important issue in the presidential campaign?”

“Get your finger out of your mouth.”

“What do you dream about?”

“Not about you.”

“What inspired you to write?”

“A fountain pen. A piece of paper.”

Then I called out a question: “What gives you the most optimism?”

I expected him to say “People” again, but this time he said, “The world.”

There was hardly any standing room left in the auditorium, yet one fellow was sitting on the floor rather than take the aisle seat occupied by a large Groucho Marx doll.

Remembering George Carlin

George Carlin died in June 2008. He was a generous friend. When I performed in Los Angeles, he sent a limousine to pick me up at the airport, and I stayed at his home. And such a sweet man. When I opened for him at the Warner-Grand Theater in San Pedro, we were hanging around in his dressing room, where he was nibbling from a vegetable plate. I watched as he continued to be genuinely gracious with every fan who stopped by. If they wanted his autograph, he would gladly sign his name. If they wanted to be photographed with him, he would assume the pose. If they wanted to have a little chat, he indulged them with congeniality.

I said, “You really show respect for everybody.”

“Well,” he responded, “that's just the way *I* would want to be treated.”

As a performer, Carlin was uncompromising, knowing that his audience trusted him not to be afraid of offending them. In fact, he was excited by that possibility. The day before one of his live HBO specials, he called and told me to be sure and watch it, because he would devote the first ten minutes of his performance to the subject of abortion.

Carlin had long been vocal in support of the right to smoke and ingest various drugs, and he posed this rhetorical question: “Why are there no recreational drugs in suppository form?” I was pleased to inform him that teenage girls have been experimenting with tampons soaked in vodka, inserting them vaginally or rectally as a way of getting intoxicated without their parents detecting booze on their breath.

No matter what else Richard Nixon accomplished in his lifetime, his obituaries always mentioned him as the first American president to resign, and no matter what else George Carlin accomplished in *his* lifetime, his obits always connected him with the Supreme Court ruling on “The Seven Words You Can’t Say on Television.”

When asked in the Green Room at the Warner-Grand Theater by producer Dan Pasley why he didn’t include the word “nigger” in that list, Carlin replied, “There’s nothing funny about it -- that really *is* a dirty word -- but repressed words about sexual functions and bodily parts were truly funny. I had only been thinking about the ‘dirty’ words in terms of sex and bodily functions, and how uptight these religious freaks have made us. *That’s* fun, that’s some funny shit.”

At a private memorial for family and friends, Carlin's daughter Kelly read from his burial instructions, written on May 1, 1990:

Upon my death, I wish to be cremated. The disposition of my ashes (dispersal at sea, on land or in the air) shall be determined by my surviving family (wife and daughter) in accordance with their knowledge of my prejudices and philosophies regarding geography and spirituality. Under no circumstances are my ashes to be retained by anyone or buried in a particular location. The eventual dispersal can be delayed for any reasonable length of time required to reach a decision, but not to exceed one month following my death.

I wish no public service of any kind. I wish no religious service of any kind. I prefer a private gathering at my home, attended by friends and family members who shall be determined by my surviving family (wife and daughter). It should be extremely informal, they should play rhythm and blues music, and they should laugh a lot. Vague references to spirituality (secular) will be permitted.

Kelly added, “There will be no mention of God allowed” and “No one will be allowed to say that ‘George is now smiling down at us from Heaven above.’ ”

Carlin once told an audience of children how to be a class clown as a way of attracting attention. “I didn’t start out with fake heart attacks in the aisle,” he explained. Ah, if only that’s what he was doing *this* time.

But a reporter did once ask him how he wanted to die.

“I’d like to explode spontaneously in someone’s living room,” he replied. “That, to me, is the way to go out.”

And, through his CDs, DVDs, books, and online, George Carlin does indeed continue to explode spontaneously in living rooms across the country and around the world.

Roasting With Robin

The first time I met Robin Williams was in 1976 at the first annual Comedy Competition in San Francisco. He was sweating profusely, his hairy chest and arms showing, and he wore a brown cowboy hat. I was one of the judges. Although I voted for Williams, he came in second.

I forget the winner's name, but I recall that the lights went off in the middle of his act, so he took advantage of the accident, and in the darkness he whispered loudly, "Okay, now, when the lights go back on, everybody shout out, 'Surprise! Surprise!' " The audience laughed and applauded that ad lib.

Robin's disappointment was palpable, but his stardom was inevitable. Our paths continued to cross backstage at benefits where we both performed. He was also a reader of *The Realist*. In 1988, the word got around that I was going to undergo surgery, and he sent me a generous unsolicited check to help.

In 1998, Anita Hoffman, Abbie's widow, dying from cancer, decided to take her life on December 27, so as not to spoil Christmas for family and friends who were visiting and bringing all kinds of food. Her appetite was ravenous, and her humor was dark. After devouring a pastrami sandwich, she remarked, "I better brush my teeth, I don't want to get gum pockets."

She was staying at a house in San Francisco owned by actress Wynona Rider, whose godfather was Timothy Leary. He had been Anita’ s role model during the final months of *his* life. “You couldn’ t choose how and when and with whom you were *born,”* he said, “but you can take charge of your own death.” And that’ s exactly what she was now doing.

Robin Williams learned about Anita’ s situation from his co-star in *Good Will Hunting,* Matt Damon, who had been told about it by his girlfriend, Wynona. Robin had never met Anita, but he called and offered to pay a visit, in keeping with his benign case of Patch Adams Syndrome. After all, if Patch could travel to Trinidad to entertain murderers who would be hanged three days later, why shouldn’ t it be appropriate for Robin to make Anita laugh on Christmas day? She hesitated— “I’ ve never really been a fan of his work,” she thought—but then invited him to visit....

And so it came to pass in 2014 that Robin Williams would also commit suicide. In the midst of mass mourning him, Rush Limbaugh explained that “Leftists are never happy.” And the anti-choice *Lifenews* claimed that Robin killed himself out of guilt over an abortion his girlfriend had in the 1970s.

The last time I saw him was in 1987 on a Saturday evening at the Hollywood Press Club, where we were both participants at a roast for Harlan Ellison, the prolific author of fantasy, science-fiction and speculative-fiction, his work including 1,700 short stories. He also had a reputation for angry ranting with literary style. My wife Nancy said, “He has a black belt in Mouth.”

The roast was supposedly a fundraiser for his defense in a frivolous libel lawsuit. Although the auditorium was filled at $25 a head, the plaintiff, Michael Fleischer, was suing Ellison for a million dollars. In a 1980 issue of *Comics Journal*, in a review of Fleischer’s comic-book-novel, Ellison called him “crazy” like H.P. Lovecraft and other renowned writers. Ironically, Harlan had intended it to be a compliment.

Screenwriter David Gerrold remarked, “The fact that Ellison is a self-made man relieves God of a great responsibility. I’ve been Harlan’s friend for six years. Of course, I’ve known him for eighteen years.”

The moderator of the roast, film critic Digby Diehl, read a telegram from Isaac Asimov, which concluded, “Kick him in the balls—signed, Frank Sinatra.” Onstage, Asimov’s fellow science-fiction writer Robert Silverberg announced that “Harlan Ellison is so short that he goes up on his girlfriend." Robin and I were sitting next to each other, and we simultaneously crossed that joke off our imaginary lists.

There were short-jokes galore. Have a few free samples: "Short? I carry a life-sized portrait of Harlan in my wallet." "Harlan's parents were normal, but the milkman was a syphilitic dwarf." And the producer of *Twilight Zone,* Phil de Guere, complained, "It took Harlan nine months before he figured out how to shoot himself in the foot at *Twilight Zone* and get canned. But of all the people I have worked with, Harlan is by far the shortest. Harlan doesn't have a short fuse. He *is* a short fuse."

My own short-joke was, "Actually, this isn't a roast. It's more like a microwave." Robin said, "Harlan is a tall Paul Williams, a white Paul Simon." I pointed out that "Harlan is on the right side of a lot of important fights. He's fought against racism and sexism. That's why this whole panel is white males."

A roast by definition overflows with irreverence, insults, and raunchiness. Examples: "If it's true that you are what you eat, Harlan would be a vagina." Stan Lee of comic-book infamy said, "Harlan is a very difficult person to arouse. Ask any of his former wives." And Robin contributed a metaphorical dick joke: "If you're hung like a field mouse, don't stand in the wind."

I stated that "Harlan is an egomaniac partially because at the moment of sexual climax, he calls out his own name." Robin shouted: "Was it good for *me?"* I responded, "Harlan has a typewriter with only two letters—M and E. And on it he has somehow managed to write 42 books as well as 300 of Steve Allen's songs plus a few of Lyndon LaRouche's speeches."

Robert *Psycho* Block remembered when "Harlan was interested in re-writing other people's work. He took me into a nearby drugstore and showed me how he had erased all the M's
off all the Murine bottles." I observed that "Harlan has always refused to get involved with the drug world—as a user. However, he *is* a dealer. In fact, he was the connection for Kathy Evelyn Smith."

A severe groan emanated from the audience, and I realized that I was treating a roaster as a roastee, not an uncommon practice. Robin Williams and Robert DeNiro had been with Smith and John Belushi on the night of Belushi's death. "Oh, that's a good one," Robin said with understandable Sarcasm 101. "Listen," I replied, "if she didn't plea-bargain, you wouldn't be here tonight."

Moderator Digby Diehl proceeded to rub salt in Robin's wound that I had unintentionally caused: "Robin Williams has been called the king of improv, and he has proven it tonight by interrupting everybody, stepping on their lines, doing schtick. He’s been about as annoying he can be.”

“I loved that review, though,” said Robin, referring to Diehl’s negative critique of *Club Paradise.*

Diehl: “I was hoping you hadn’t seen it, Robin. It’s said of you in Hollywood that you don’t read your scripts. Anyway, ladies and gentlemen, I’d like to bring you Robin Williams, fresh from *Club Paradise,* his biggest failure yet.”

Williams: “Thank you, Gary Franklin [the movie reviewer Diehl replaced]. What can you say about a man who’s a TV critic? A man who looks at a good film and letters it like a report card. Is that art? I think not. And I’d like to thank Harlan’s lawyer for proving, God, is there a reason for law? I think not. And I’d like to thank Mr. Krassner for all the Kathy Smith references. That’s some funny stuff.”

Robin confessed, “I really don’t know Harlan for shit,” then described his house. “It’s like Notre Dame done by Sears. There’s Harlan, naked, playing in his toys with a beautiful shiksa goddess jumping up and down saying, ‘I like him. He’s smart.’” Robin morphed into a little boy in the bathroom. “I’m reading Bradbury, dad.” (Roaster Ray

Bradbury chortled. Robin suppressed a fake sob.) “It’s just taken me so far down to be here. I wish I could cry but I don’t care.” (The audience applauded.)

“Well,” said Diehl, “it’s been basically a really hostile, ugly night, with a lot of lame jokes and sentimental drivel. But we still have the ritual forgiveness to look forward to.” He introduced Harlan Ellison, “a man with the milk of human kindness dripping from his fangs.”

“Ha, ha. Very funny, I’m sure,” Harlan reacted. “I had a friend once, but the wheels fell off. Zip friends. Dust is my friend. And what of these fuckers here? Robin Williams can’t even get a pair of pants that fits him.”

“There’s a reason for that, Harlan.”

“Yeah, sure. It was for you they made up the phrase, ‘Is it in yet?’ You wanna talk about that, Williams? I’ve got four words for you: *Club Paradise* and *The Survivors.”*

“Yeah, on a double bill with *Man With a Dog* [Ellison wrote the screenplay].”

Harlan continued to baste the roasters. As for me, he said, “I want to thank my old chum Krassner for being here tonight. I want to commend him on his restraint in the remarks he made. Or perhaps it was only caution on his part because I promised if he fucked around with me, I’d let on that he caught his herpes from Nancy Reagan.”

Digby Diehl concluded, “Harlan’s only fear is that he’ll get in a car accident and have to re-live this event. And in the true tradition of roasting, that tradition being to talk dirty and mention a big name, thank you all for coming. And join us next week when our guest roaster will be Mother Teresa.”

I blurted out, “I fucked *her.”*

The audience screamed, hooted, stomped, and Robin jumped out of his chair and ran around in a circle. Then he said, “Gandhi is going, ‘Who is this man? He may not get through the gates of heaven for that line.’”

Harlan said, “Thank God Krassner got off one good one.”

I explained, “I guess I just fell into the insult mode.”

“Basically,” said Robert Silverberg, “the roast is a really ugly, repugnant, immature and childish art form. I hate it. And I will only do one if Harlan is the target.”

And on our way home, Nancy summed up the irony: “A compliment was originally perceived as an insult, and consequently we’ve had an evening of insults which were really compliments.”

Remembering Dick Gregory

I first met Dick Gregory when he asked me to interview him for *The Realist* in New York. I saw him again when I was in Chicago. He was performing at the Playboy Club and invited me to his show. Two years previously, Negro comedians performed only in Negro nightclubs, and Gregory was no exception.

But one evening the regular white comic at the Playboy Club got sick, and Gregory took his place. It made *Time* magazine, and he was invited to perform on the *Tonight Show*, but he declined unless, after doing his stand-up act, he would be asked to sit down and talk with Jack Paar. The gamble worked, and Gregory became an instant celebrity, breaking through the color barrier with humor.

Eventually we became friends and fellow demonstrators. Now he was performing at the Playboy Club, not as a substitute comic but as a star attraction. They had to supply me with a jacket, and a tie that was decorated all over with bunny symbols. Gregory was already on stage.

“How could Columbus discover America,” he was asking the audience, “when the Indians were already *here?*”

In his dressing room between shows, Gregory took out his wallet and showed me a tattered copy of his favorite poem, “If,” by Rudyard Kipling. I laughed and he looked offended, until I explained that I was laughing because it was also *my* favorite poem, and “the unforgiving minute” was my favorite poetic phrase.

Gregory visited me on the lower east side of New York. The entire side of one building on that block featured a fading advertisement for a cleanser personified by the Gold Dust Twins, a pair of little Negro boys. It had originally been painted right on the bricks.

When he saw it, he said, “They ought to take that whole wall and preserve it in a museum somewhere.”

* * *

On a work-vacation in the Florida Keys with Abbie and Anita Hoffman in December in 1967. I followed a neighborhood crow down the road, then continued walking to town by myself to use the telephone. First I called Gregory, since it was his city Chicago that we were planning to invade the presidential convention in the 1968 summer. He told me that he had decided to run for president, and he wanted to know if I thought Bob Dylan would make a good vice president.

"Oh, sure, but to tell you the truth, I don't think Dylan would ever get involved in electoral politics."

Gregory would end up with assassination researcher Mark Lane as his running mate. Next, I called Jerry Rubin in New York to arrange for a meeting when we returned.

At our counter-convention we all attended an Unbirthday Party for President Lyndon Johnson at the Coliseum, with Ed Sanders, leader of the Fugs, serving as emcee. The atmosphere was highly emotional. Dick Gregory recited the Preamble to the Declaration of Independence with incredible fervor. Fists were being upraised in the audience as he spoke, and I thrust my own fist into the air for the first time.

* * *

When my marriage broke up in 1971 I moved to San Francisco and I had my own talk program. Gregory announced on my show that, until the war in Vietnam was over, he was going to stop eating solid foods. I in turn announced that, until the war was over, I was going to eat all of Dick Gregory's meals. Actually, my only *real* discipline was being silent one day a week.

When my young daughter Holly came out to stay with me that summer, she decided to join me on my silent day. We communicated with handwritten notes. Holly wrote, *Does laughter count?* Since we were making up the rules as we went along, I answered, *Yes, but no tickling*. Naturally she tried to make me laugh, but I held it in – and got a rush.

All the energy that normally gets dissipated into the air with laughter seemed to surge through my body instead. I decided to stop laughing altogether, just to see what would happen. The more I didn't laugh, the more I found funny. And, paying closer attention to others, I refined my appreciation of laughter as another whole language that could often be more revealing than words. Sometimes I would get a twinge of guilt if I nearly slipped and laughed, and I remembered what I had always known, that children must be *taught* to be serious. When I mentioned my laugh-fast to Dick Gregory, still on his food-fast, it didn't sound so far-fetched to him.

That's two things people do out of insecurity," he said. "Eating and laughing."

"Well, what would happen to us if everyone in our audiences realized that?"

"Brother, we'd go out of business."

* * *

I was invited to a Christmas party in 1977 by *Hustler* publisher Larry Flynt. Gregory was at the party, and Flynt asked each of us to perform, but first he would take the microphone himself. To my surprise-shock that he wanted me to publish his magazine beside *The Realist* while he traveled around the country to spread his (temporary) born-again Chrisianity.

On Thanksgiving Day, Gregory had been arrested in front of the White House for protesting the lack of human rights in South Africa. Larry Flynt had a premonition that there would be an assassination attempt on Gregory. Flynt contacted him a couple of weeks later, and they became friends. Gregory was now staying at Flynt's mansion in Columbus, helping him change to a vegetarian diet. Flynt had already taken off forty pounds. On the day before the Christmas party, Gregory was in the middle of giving himself an enema when Flynt walked in.

According to Gregory, “Larry said, ‘Let me tell you about this fantastic guy I've got comin' out, and I don't know what I'm gonna do yet but I just wanna talk with him.’ And I said, ‘Well, who is it?’ He said, ‘Paul Krassner.’ And I just fell out, and said, ‘Are you serious? He's one of the hippest minds in the whole world.’ Then he came back and said, ‘How long you been knowin' him?’ and I told him, ‘All through the sixties,’ you know. And I said it was a fantastic idea.”

For the New Year, Flynt flew Gregory and me to the Bahamas. Gregory was in the kitchen, diligently preparing a health drink for Flynt – this must have been the birth of his Bahamian Diet powder -– and he was also feeding unfiltered conspiracy theories to his eager student.

At midnight, we all went out on the dock and stood in a misty drizzle as Gregory uttered truly eloquent prayers for each of us. When he finished, Flynt’s wife Althea whined, like Lucy in the *Peanuts* strip, “My hair's getting all wet.” It was her way of saying “Amen.”

On New Year's Day, we were sitting in the sand, just relaxing. Flynt had bought a paperback novel by Gore Vidal in the hotel store, but first he was reading the Sunday *New York Times* and worrying about the implications of juries with only six members. A moment later he was rubbing suntan lotion on my back.

“I'll bet Hugh Hefner never did this for you,” he said.

* * *

Larry Flynt had been traveling around a lot, but he happened to be back in L.A. at the same time that my friend LSD guru Ram Dass was visiting, so I had the unique pleasure of introducing them. Larry, Althea, Ram Dass and I went to a health-food restaurant, where we discovered that we shared something in common: we were all practicing celibacy – Larry at the suggestion of Dick Gregory, Althea by extension, Ram Dass for spiritual purposes, and me just for the sheer perversity of it.

When Larry got shot down south by a racist nut because *Hustler* had a black naked model, Althea had transformed the Coca-Cola Suite at Emory University Hospital into her office, where she was now studying the slides of the irreverent "Jesus and the Adulteress" feature. Dick Gregory was there, and he said, "This scares *me*." He was concerned about reaction in the Bible Belt, notwithstanding the fact that *Hustler's* research department had already made certain that the text followed the Bible.

And now Althea was checking for any sexism that might have slipped past the male editors' limited consciousness. The spread was already in page forms, but not yet collated into the magazine, and there was still a gnawing dilemma about whether or not to publish it.

The marketing people were aghast at the possibility that wholesalers would refuse to distribute an issue of the magazine with such a blatantly blasphemous feature. Althea and I voted to publish. Gregory and editor Bruce David voted not to publish. "I' m against it," he said, "because we're this is an issue that just simply will not be distributed."

Faced with this crucial decision, Althea made her choice on the basis of pure whimsicality. She noticed a pair of pigeons on the window ledge. One of them was waddling toward the other. “All right,” she said, “if that dove walks over and pecks the *other* dove, then we *will* publish this.” The pigeon continued strutting along the window ledge, but it stopped short and didn’t peck the other pigeon, so publication of “Jesus and the Adulteress” was postponed indefinitely.

Of course, Dick Gregory continued to spread his diligent activism until he died. He was a loss to me, and to this country, and around the world, but his powerful inspiration remains.

The Missing Episode of *Seinfeld*

[Jerry Seinfeld is onstage at a comedy club.]

Jerry: Did God look down at Adam and Eve one day and say, "Oops, I forgot something. Let there be erections." So Adam got the first hard-on in history. But God forgot to say *when.* And that's why men don't always get an erection when they *want* one. Women don't know it, but sometimes men have to actually *pray* for a hard-on. "Please, God, I'll be sensitive to her needs, I promise, oh God, please, just make it hard . . . "

[Cut to George Costanza, having dinner with his parents. There is no conversation, but George's father is smiling, then chortles out loud.]

George: What! What! What's so funny? Is it because I'm becoming more like *you* every day?

George's father: Should I tell 'im? I'm gonna tell 'im.

George's mother: No, don't tell 'im. It's private between you and me. It's none of his beeswax.

George: C'mon, stop teasing me, I wanna know, whatever it is, I wanna know, so c'mon, tell me.

George's father: Okay, I'm gonna tell 'im. I've been taking Viagra, George, and it really works. Your mother and I have been making whoopee like it was going out of style.

George's mother: Yeah, but it's not *me* he gets excited over. It's only because of the Viagra.

George's father: What *difference* does it make, George? Listen to this. The pills cost $10 each, but a friend of mine goes to Mexico and he gets me a whole bottle of fifty for $42.

George: Gee, that's less than a buck a fuck, isn't it?

George's mother: George! You must never say the F-word in this kitchen! *[To her husband]* See, I told you, we never should've told 'im.

[Cut to Jerry's apartment. Kramer bursts through the door.]

Kramer: Jerry! Jerry! I'm gonna be rich! I bought a bunch of shares in Pfizer when it was real low, and now they put Viagra on the market and all the doctors are getting writers' cramp from writing prescriptions, and the stock is going up and up like it swallowed Viagra! Jerry, I'm gonna be able to retire!

Jerry: Retire from *what*? Kramer, you don't do anything *now.*

Kramer: Yes, I do. I scheme. I spend a lot of time scheming, Jerry. But now I'll be able to *finance* my schemes. I'm gonna be able to call my own bluff, every day! If that's not retirement, I don't know what is.

Jerry: Anyway, I might get this Stand-up Comedy Award tonight, and I’m trying to think of what to say that will sound completely spontaneous. So, Kramer, what’s your *current* scheme?

Kramer: Okay, I got this idea because of the insurance companies. Blue Cross will pay for six Viagra pills a month. Well, that’s very arbitrary, isn’t it? I mean I get six hard-ons in one *day*.

Jerry: That’s the national average, you know, six hard-ons a day.

Kramer: Jerry, believe me, Kramer don’t have “average” hard-ons. But here’s my merchandising plan. It’s for one-night stands—a combination package of Viagra and RU486, the morning-after pill. It’s a natural for the unisex market.

[Cut to the restaurant. Elaine and George are sitting at the table.]

Elaine: But, George, that’s stealing.

George: Yep. And from my own parents.

Elaine: You have no scruples. How do you know your father isn’t *counting* the number of times he “makes whoopee” with your mother? He’ll *realize* that you took some of his Viagra pills when he thinks he has nine more times to go but the bottle has only five pills left?

George: You think he keeps a tally sheet? He’ll never even suspect.

Elaine You’re in denial again—but you have to give me a couple of pills. I would just *love* to put a Viagra into Jerry and Kramer’s coffee.

George: Oh, really? I thought you had *scruples,* Elaine. Dosing somebody is unethical, especially friends.

Elaine: Oh, didn’t I tell you? I had my scruples removed with laser surgery.

George: Seriously, Elaine, what about all the *side effects* of Viagra?

Elaine: Stop worrying, George. Hurry, let me just have two. Jerry and Kramer will be here any minute.

[Cut to the Stand-up Comedy Award ceremonies. Jerry, Elaine, George and Kramer have been sitting at a table, drinking coffee. Suddenly the table rises slightly.]

Jerry: Kramer, stop that, what are you *doing?*

George: Maybe he’s holding a one-man séance.

Kramer: I can’t get it *down!* Jerry, I can’t get it *down!*

Elaine: Gosh, Kramer, you must have been thinking about sex, huh?

Kramer: No, I was thinking about my business plan. That’s the only thing that really arouses me. When I’m with a babe, I just think about my latest scheme and I get aroused. But I always let the babe take the credit.

[Courtney Cox is emceeing the event. Now she' s announcing the winner.]

Courtney: And the Best Stand-up Comedy Award goes to . . . Jerry Seinfeld!

[Jerry walks up to the stage. Courtney and Jerry embrace warmly. She gives him the statuette. As the audience applause subsides, the blood flow to the spongy tissue in Jerry' s penis increases. He tries unsuccessfully to hide his erection with the statuette.]

Jerry: Thank you all so much. Well, as you can *see*, I' m very excited about receiving this reward. I feel all tingly. And I have a headache. I' m a little dizzy too. An erection is like a cop. When you *want* one, it' s never there. But when the *last* thing in the world you want is a hard-on—a *public* hard-on—then *boing!* I' m busted, right here on stage, with a spotlight, in front of five hundred strangers. I feel like I have to vomit. I' ll try to avoid the first few rows. And everything looks blue. Especially my testicles. Is there a groupie in the house? Well, I' m not actually a *group*. Is there a *singly* in the house? Who would like to get laid tonight? I' ll point the way. So I' ve become a human dowsing rod. Now I think I' m gonna faint. But even while I' m lying unconscious here on the stage *[Jerry is fainting]*, my penis will still be a stand-up . . .

THE LATER YEARS

Are Rape Jokes Funny?

Abortion was still illegal in 1970. At the time, as both an underground abortion referral service and a stand-up satirist, I faced an undefined paradox. I wouldn’ t allow victims to become the target of my humor, yet there was one particular routine I did that called for a “rape-in” of legislators’ wives in order to impregnate them so that they would then convince their husbands to decriminalize abortion..

But feminist friends objected. I resisted at first, because it was such a well-intentioned joke. And then I reconsidered. Even in a joke, why should women be assaulted because men made the laws? Legislators' wives were the victims in that joke, but the legislators themselves were the oppressors, and their hypocrisy was really my target. But for me to stop doing that bit of comedy wasn't chickenshit censorship, it was empathetic editing.

Now, more than four decades later, rape-joking triggered a widespread controversy when a woman who prefers to remain anonymous went to a comedy club, expecting to be entertained. She chose the Laugh Factory in Hollywood because Dane Cook was on the bill, but he was followed by Daniel Tosh, and she had never heard of him.

In an email to her *Tumblr* blogger friend, she accused Tosh of saying that “rape jokes are always funny, how can a rape joke not be funny, rape jokes are hilarious.” She was so offended that she felt morally compelled to shout, “Actually, rape jokes are *never* funny!” Tosh paused and then seized the opportunity, responding, “Wouldn’t it be funny if that girl got raped by like five guys? Like right now? What if a bunch of guys just raped her?” The audience laughed raucously. After all, isn’t anyone who yells at a comedian practically asking to become an immediate target? But this woman was stunned and humiliated, and she left. In the lobby, she demanded to see the manager, who apologized profusely and gave her free tickets for another night--admitting, however, that she understood if this woman never wanted to return.

In her email, she concluded that, “having to basically flee while Tosh was enthusing about how hilarious it would be if I was gang-raped in that small, claustrophobic room was pretty viscerally terrifying and threatening all the same, even if the actual scenario was unlikely to take place. The suggestion of it is violent enough and was meant to put me in my place.” She added, “Please re-blog and spread the word.” And indeed, it went viral.

Coincidentally, on the same night that Tosh, in his signature sarcastic approach to reality, provoked the woman, Sarah Silverman was performing at Foxwords Casino, and she touched upon the same taboo subject: “We need more rape jokes. We really do. Needless to say, rape, the most heinous crime imaginable, seems it’s a comic’s dream, though. It’s because it seems when you do rape jokes, that the material is so dangerous and edgy, and the truth is, it’s like the safest area to talk about in comedy ’cause who’s gonna complain about a rape joke? Rape victims? They don’t even *report* rape. They’re just traditionally not complainers.”

Ironically, in *The Aristocrats*, a documentary entirely about a classic joke of the same name, Silverman complained (facetiously) that she was once raped by show-biz legend Joe Franklin. Also, her rape tips for men include, "Carry a rape whistle. If you find that you are about to rape someone, blow the whistle until someone comes to stop you." However, another joke of hers goes like this: “I was raped by a doctor—which is so bittersweet for a Jewish girl.”

In the magazine *Bitch (* “Feminist Response to Pop Culture”), an article titled “Laughing It Off: What Happens When Women Tell Rape Jokes?” by Katherine Leyton stated: “Some female comics tell jokes that clearly target rape culture, such as one classic skit by veteran comedian Wanda Sykes, ‘Even as little girls we’ re taught we have something everybody wants—you gotta protect it, you gotta be careful, you gotta cherish it. That’ s a lot of fucking pressure! I would like a break! You know what would make my life so much easier? Wouldn’ t it be wonderful if our *pussies were detachable?’* The joke goes on to detail situations where you could leave your ‘detachable pussy’ at home, mainly to avoid the chance of rape.”

* * *

In the fall of 1981, I booked myself for a cross-country tour, from New York to Chicago, Minneapolis, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

While I was in New York, a nun was raped. When I got to Chicago, the rapist was also there. He had given himself up to the police. On stage I explained the true reason why: “He heard that the Mafia, in a rush of Christian compassion, put a $25,000 contract out on his life.” That part was true. “So now I'm asking the Mafia to use their clout to end the war in El Salvador since *four* nuns were raped and killed there.” They must’ve heard my request. By the time I got to Los Angeles, the *Herald-Examiner* was reporting that the Mafia was “probably the largest source of arms for the rebels in El Salvador.”

In the spring of 1982, there was a Radical Humor Festival at New York University. That weekend, the festival sponsored an evening of radical comedy. The next day, my performance was analyzed by an unofficial women's caucus. Robin Tyler (“I am not a lesbian comic--I am a comic who is a lesbian”) served as the spokesperson for their conclusions. What had caused a stir was my reference to the use of turkey basters by single mothers-to-be who were attempting to impregnate themselves by artificial insemination. Tyler explained to me, “You have to understand, some women still have a hang-up about penetration.”

Well, I must have been suffering from Delayed Punchline Syndrome, because it wasn't until I was returning on a plane, contemplating the notion that freedom of absurdity transcends gender difference, that I finally did respond, in absentia: “Yeah, but *you* have to understand, some men still feel threatened by turkey basters.”

* * *

The Onion posted a story about a college dorm that was nicknamed “The Rape Hall.” And an *Ironic Times* headline stated, “Quaaludes Ends

Its Relationship With Bill Cosby." Earlier in Amy Schumer's stand-up career, she told this joke: "I used to date Hispanic guys, but now I prefer consensual." She has since been accused of racist comedy. "I used to do a lot of short dumb joke like that," she responded." I played a dumb white girl onstage. I am evolving as an artist. I am taking responsibility and hope I haven't hurt anyone. I apologize if I did."

Indeed, in an episode of *Inside Amy Schumer* on Comedy Central, a sketch--*Football Town Nights* parodying *Friday Night Lights*--featured a Texas town's new high school football coach. He informs his teenage squad that he's going to be doing things differently. There's going to be a no-huddle offense. Two-a-day practices are mandatory. And there will be no raping. "But we play football!," one player cries. The rest of the team chimes in: "But we play football!" "What if she thinks it's rape, but I don't?" "What about at-away games?" "What if my mom is the DA and won't prosecute, can I rape?" The whole town bullies this coach for taking something away from the players that they obviously need.

In another sketch, Schumer plays a flirtatious lawyer ironically *defending* Cosby by bedazzling the judge as well as the jury. In a one-woman show about rape, *Asking For It,* responding to Daniel Tosh, award-winning British comic Adrienne Truscott performs with her bare vagina uncovering a photo of Bill Cosby. And on *Late Night,* Seth Myers rhetorically asks, "Why did Bill Cosby cross the road?" He answers himself, "To avoid a reporter who was asking about sexual assault allegations."

At the National Association of Television Program Executives conference, Jay Leno commented on the allegations against Bill Cosby: "I don't know why it's so hard to believe women. You to go Saudi Arabia and you need two women to testify against a man. Here you need twenty-five [now forty-five]." Leno also used one of Justin Bieber' s song hits for a punchline, pointing out that Bieber "wouldn't want to sing 'I Wanna Be Your 'Boyfriend'' to guys in prison."

In a routine about political correctness, George Carlin suggested that a euphemism for a rape victim would be "unwilling sperm recipient." On *The View,* Joy Behar exclaimed that she would vote for a rapist as long as he supported beloved feminist issues like abortion and the free contraception they bicker so much about.

On *The Daily Show,* Jon Stewart aimed his arrow at presidential candidate Donald Trump (who bought 20,000 copies of *The Art of the Deal,* making it a bestseller). Stewart shouts, "There are probably some non-rapists caught up in that tide, whether they' re unable to rape for medical reasons, or whether they' re just all raped-out." A clip shows

Trump reading out loud from a report that “80% of Central American women and girls are raped crossing into the United Sates.” CNN’s Don Lemon tells Trump, “That’s about women being raped, it’s not about criminals coming across the border or entering the country.”

Trump: *"Somebody's* doing the raping, Don."

“*Touche!,"* said Stewart. “I believe we have our campaign slogan: *Trump 2016--Somebody's Doing the Raping*."

Immediately after *The Daily Show* came *The Nightly Show* with Larry Wilmore. He plays the same clip just a slightly bit longer: Trump spouting, *"Somebody's* doing the raping, Don. I mean, you know, somebody’s *doing* the rapiing, You think the women are being raped. Well, who’s *doing* the raping?" Wilmore repeats: “*Who's doing the raping?* Okay, who’s bringing the chips? Who’s bringing the beer? *Wait, wait. Who's doing the raping?* Oh, okay, sorry about that. I didn’t know, I had to ask. I have to tell you, though, as far as campaign slogans go: *Donald Trump 2016--Who's Doing the Raping?"* Hey, it sounds familiar already.

And on Bill Maher’s *Real Time,* the reactionary blond witch Ann Coulter defended Trump: “These aren’t people we have to have here. We already have our own rapists and murderers. We don’t need to be bringing in more rapists and murderers."

* * *

Although Daniel Tosh is a consistently unapologetic performer for the sardonic material he exudes on his Comedy Central series--which features a running theme of rape jokes, even including one about his sister--for this occasion he decided to go the Twitter route: “All the out of context misquotes aside, I’d like to sincerely apologize.” He also tweeted, “The point I was making before I was heckled is there are awful things in the world but you can still make jokes about them.”

According to Jamie Masada, owner of the Laugh Factory, Tosh asked the audience, “What you guys wanna talk about?” Someone called out “Rape,” and a woman in the audience started screaming, “No, rape is painful, don’t talk about it.” Then, says Masada, “Daniel came in, and he said, ‘Well, it sounds like she’s been raped by five guys’—something like that. I didn’t hear properly. It was a comment—it wasn’t a joke at the expense of this girl.” Masada claims that she sat through the rest of Tosh’s performance, which received a standing ovation, before she complained to the manager.

Fellow comedians defended Tosh with their own tweets. Dane Cook: “If you journey through this life easily offended by other peoples words I think it’s best for everyone if you just kill yourself.” Doug Stanhope:

"You' re hilarious. If you ever apologize to a heckler again I will rape you." Louis C.K.: "Your show makes me laugh every time I watch it. And you have pretty eyes" --except that he wrote it after watching Tosh on TV, but before he learned about the Laugh Factory incident. Nevertheless, he was excoriated and accused of being a "rape apologist." But C.K. himself is no stranger to sexual-assault jokes. Onstage, he has said that he' s against rape-- "unless you have a reason, like you wanna fuck someone and they won' t let you, in which case what other option do you have?"

Conversely, in an episode of his TV series, *Louie*, he reversed such roles. After leaving a bar with an especially aggressive woman, Laurie (played by Melissa Leo), that he had inadvertently met earlier, she performs fellatio on him in her pickup truck, then insists that he in turn perform cunnilingus on her. And he refuses. So, she attacks him physically with unabashed viciousness, mounts him, and he gives in to her demand. In other words, Laurie rapes Louie. No joke. To watch this scene was positively jaw-dropping. It served as a reminder of how often comedians--and their jaded audiences--find prison-rape jokes not only to be funny, but also, as in the case of pedophile Jerry Sandusky, an act of delayed justice resulting in laughter that morphs into applause. A *N.Y. Post* headline about pedophile Subway pitchman: "Enjoy a foot long in jail."

And “Don’t drop the soap” even made its way to the animated *Family Guy.*

Meanwhile, reacting to the Tosh tirade, Julie Burton, president of the Women’s Media Center, stated: “If free speech permits a comedian to suggest a woman in his audience should be gang-raped, then it certainly permits us to object, and to ask what message this sends to survivors or to perpetuators. Tosh’s comment was just one extreme example of pop culture’s dismissive treatment of sexualized violence, which desensitizes audiences to enormous human suffering. Internet outcry is encouraging, but popular media needs to push back too.”

And the original blogger posted another message:

“My friend and I wanted to thank everyone for there *[sic]* support and for getting this story out there. We just wanted everyone to know what Daniel Tosh had done and if you didn’t agree then to stop following him. My friend is surprised to have gotten any form of an apology and doesn’t wish to press any further charges against [him].” What? Press charges? Rape is a crime. Rape jokes aren’t. They are the risk of free speech. The blog concluded, “She does plan on returning to comedy shows in the future, but to see comedians that she’s seen before or to at least look up artists before going to their shows.”

Wait till she finds out that Dane Cook suggested she kill herself.

* * *

Now, over forty years since I stopped presenting my concept about a rape-in of legislators’ wives, I sent the first draft of this piece around to several friends, and I was particularly touched by a response from Emma Cofod, production manager at my then-publisher, Soft Skull Press:

“Thank you for sharing this! I truly appreciate your thoughts here. I read about this woman's complaint last week, and the whole event turned my stomach. What Tosh did was personally threatening, which is not OK. But even though I fall neatly into the feminist camp, I think your original joke is hilarious—within context, and coming from a comedian whose philosophy I identify with. Color me conflicted.”

I think that kind of conflict is healthy. And then there was Louis C.K.’s appearance on *The Daily Show*. This is what he told Jon Stewart between interruptions:

“If this [controversy about Tosh] is like a fight between comedians and bloggers--hyperbole and garbage comes out of those two places, just uneducated, unfettered--it’s also a fight between comedians and feminists, because they’re natural enemies, because, stereotypically speaking, feminists can’t take a joke, and on the other side, comedians can’t take criticism. Comedians are big pussies. So to one side you say, ‘If you don’t like a joke, stay out of the comedy clubs.’ To the other side you say, ‘If you don’t like criticism, stop Googling yourself every ten seconds, because nobody’s making you read it.’ It’s positive. To me, all dialogue is positive. I think you should listen.

“If somebody has the opposite feeling from me, I wanna *hear* it so I can *add* to mine. I don’t wanna obliterate theirs with mine, that’s how I feel. Now, a lot of people don’t feel that way. For me, any joke about anything bad is great, that’s how *I* feel. Any joke about rape, a Holocaust, the Mets--*aarrgghh*, whatever--any joke about something bad is a positive thing. But now I’ve read some blogs during this whole [controversy] that made me enlightened at things I didn’t know. This woman said how rape is something that polices women’s lives, they have a narrow corridor, they can’t go out late, they can’t go to certain neighborhoods, they can’t dress a certain way, because they might--I never–-that’s part of me now that wasn’t before, and I can still enjoy the rape jokes.

“But this is also about men and women, because a lot of people are trading blogs with each other, couples are fighting about Daniel Tosh and rape jokes--that’s what I’ve been reading in blogs--but they’re both making a classic gender mistake, because the women are saying, ‘Here’s how I *feel* about this,’ but they’re also saying, ‘My feelings should be everyone’s primary concern.’ Now the men are making this mistake, they’re saying, ‘Your feelings don’t matter, your feelings are wrong and your feelings are stupid.’ If you’ve ever lived with a woman, you can’t step in shit worse than that, than to tell a woman that her feelings don’t matter. So, to the men I say, ‘Listen to what the women are saying about this.’ To the women I say, “Now that we heard you, shut the fuck up for a minute, and let’s all get back together and kill the Jews.’ That’s all I have to say about it.”

The audience laughed and applauded, as they did fifty years ago when Lenny Bruce ended a riff on prejudice: “Randy, it won’t matter any more even if you are colored and I’m Jewish, and even if Fritz is Japanese, and Wong is Greek, because then we’re all gonna stick together—and beat up the Polacks.”

My notion of a rape-in of legislators’ wives in order to impregnate them was no more meant to be taken literally than Louis C.K.’s killing the Jews or Lenny’s beating up the Polacks. Rape-in was a misunderstood metaphor; a pro-choice parable that unfortunately has become timely again, but now my target has been clarified, though it's still those increasingly incredible sexist legislators.

Words and Phrases That I’ve Coined

I really don’t like to boast, but in my lifetime, on half a dozen occasions, I have actually added words and phrases to the language. It’s something I always wanted to do. What a thrill it must have been for Dr. Harold Cerumen, who decided that cleaning out earwax should be known as “cerumen disimpaction.” And veterinarian Alice Neuticle who coined the word “neuticles”—cosmetic testicles for a dog that’s been neutered.

So I’m not asking for credit. Or cash. Since money had been called “dough” and then morphed into “bread,” I figured that “toast” would be the next logical step in that particular linguistic evolution, but my campaign itself became toast, in the sense that “toast” now means history.

Also, I was intrigued by the process of having a body part named after oneself. How proud Casper Bartholin’s parents must have been to have a son who christened the source of female lubrication that takes the friction out of intercourse as “Bartholin’s glands.” But my idea of calling those two vertical lines between your nose and your mouth “Krassner’s crease” just never became popular.

Here, then, for better or worse, are my contributions to American culture that did manage to catch on, or at least may be on their way.

1. In 1958, pornography was gradually becoming legal, but at that stage of the game, the Supreme Court was unwilling to allow 1st Amendment protection of "hard-core" porn—as opposed, I assumed, to the term I invented, "soft-core porn," which was obviously more respectable, though it seemed kind of sneaky, pretending to be squeaky clean. So I decided to satirize the concept with a new feature in *The Realist:* "Soft-Core Porn of the Month."

For example, phallic symbolism in newspapers and magazines was a key ingredient of soft-core porn. Sample: A close-up of a stickshift in a 1965 Volkswagen ad was accompanied by the question, "Does the stickshift scare your wife?" Soft-core porn now refers to limited sexuality, as seen in network TV dramas and hotel-room movies that feature jiggling breasts and buttocks but no genitalia. The way to recognize soft-core porn is that it gives men a soft-on.

2. On the afternoon of December 31, 1967, several activist friends were gathered at Abbie and Anita Hoffman's Lower East Side apartment, smoking Columbian marijuana and planning a counter-convention for the Democratic Party's event the following summer in Chicago. Our fantasy

was to counter their convention of death with our festival of life. While the Democrats would present politicians giving speeches at the convention center, we would present rock bands playing in the park. There would be booths with information about drugs and alternatives to the draft. Our mere presence would be our statement.

We needed a name, so that reporters could have a *who* for their journalistic who-what-when-where-and-why lead paragraphs. I felt a brainstorm coming on and went from the living room to the bedroom so that I could concentrate. Our working title was the International Youth Festival. But the initials IYF were a meaningless acronym. I paced back and forth, juggling titles to see if I could come up with words whose initials would make a good acronym. I tried Youth International Festival. YIF. It sounded like KIF. Kids International Festival? Nope, too contrived. Back to YIF. But what could make YIP? Now that would be ideal because then the word Yippie could be derived organically.

Of course, “Yippie” was already a traditional shout of spontaneous joy, but we could be the Yippies! It had exactly the right attitude. Yippies was the most appropriate name to signify the radicalization of hippies. What a perfect media myth that would be—the Yippies! And then, working backward, it hit me. Youth International Party! It was a natural. *Youth:* This was essentially a movement of young people involved in a generational struggle. *International:* It was happening all over the globe, from Mexico to France, from Germany to Japan. And *Party:* In both senses of the word. We would *be* a party and we would *have* a party.

Yippie was only a label to describe a phenomenon that already existed--an organic coalition of psychedelic dropouts and political activists. There was no separation between our culture and our politics. In the process of cross-pollination, we had come to share an awareness that there was a linear connection between putting kids in prison for smoking marijuana in this country and burning them to death with napalm on the other side of the planet. It was just the ultimate extension of dehumanization. But now reporters had a *who* for their lead paragraphs. A headline in the *Chicago Daily News* summed it up: "Yipes! The Yippies Are Coming!" Our myth was becoming a reality.

3. In 1972, I found myself smoking a combination of marijuana and opium with John Lennon and Yoko Ono. Lennon was absentmindedly holding on to the joint, and I asked him, "Do the British use that expression, 'Don't bogart that joint,' or is it only an American term--you know, derived from the image of a cigarette dangling from Humphrey Bogart's lip?" He replied, with a twinkle in his eye, "In England, if you

remind somebody else to pass a joint, you lose your own turn.” Since Bogart and Lauren Bacall were a classic Hollywood couple, I was inspired by that snippet of dialogue to say, “Don’t *bacall* that joint.”

4. Intuitively, I was an advocate of equal rights and opportunities for both genders long before Women’s Liberation became a movement. In 1959, I wrote, “From a completely idealistic viewpoint, classified ads for jobs should not have separate Male and Female classifications, with exceptions such as a wet-nurse.” In 1964, that practice became illegal. Masturbation was a powerful taboo for females, a subdivision of the war on pleasure, while it was somehow expected of males. But if it was okay for guys to jack-off, I wrote in a media fable, *Tales of Tongue Fu,* in 1974, then it was also okay for girls to jill-off.

5. In 1979, I covered for a weekly alternative paper the trial of ex-cop Dan White for the double execution of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk, the gay equivalent of Martin Luther King. In a surprise move, homophobic White’s defense team presented a bio-chemical explanation of his behavior, blaming it on compulsive gobbling down of sugar-filled junk-food snacks. This was a purely accidental tactic. Dale Metcalf, an attorney, told me how he happened to be playing chess with one of White’s attorneys, Steven Scherr.

Metcalf had just read *Orthomolecular Nutrition* by Abram Hoffer. He questioned Scherr about White’s diet and learned that, while under stress, White would consume candy bars and soft drinks. Metcalf recommended the book to Scherr, suggesting the author as an expert witness. In his book, Hoffer revealed a personal vendetta against doughnuts, and White had once eaten five doughnuts in a row.

During the trial, psychiatrist Martin Blinder testified that, on the night before the murders, while White was “getting depressed about the fact he would not be reappointed [as supervisor, after having quit], he just sat there in front of the TV set, bingeing on Twinkies.” In my notebook, I scribbled “Twinkie defense,” and wrote about it in my next report.

In the wake of the Twinkie defense, a representative of the Continental Baking Company asserted that the notion that overdosing on the cream-filled goodies could lead to murderous behavior was “poppycock” and “crap”—apparently two of the artificial ingredients in Twinkies, along with sodium pyrophosphate and yellow dye—while another spokesperson couldn’t believe “that a rational jury paid serious attention to that issue.” Nevertheless, some jurors did. One remarked after the trial that “It sounded like Dan White had hypoglycemia.”

Later, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported: “During the trial, no one but well-known satirist Paul Krassner—who may have coined the phrase ‘Twinkie defense'—played up that angle. His trial stories appeared in the *San Francisco Bay Guardian."*

6. Twitter is an interesting phenomenon. It’s perfect for those folks with a short attention span, and it’s scary for paranoids who don’t want to be followed. It appeals to minimalists, such as, say, Bob Dylan. I once asked him, “How come you’re taking Hebrew lessons?” He replied, “I can’t speak it.” And when I mentioned the Holocaust, he responded, “I resented it.”

Tweets range from the trivial (David Gregory announcing that he was going to eat a bagel before moderating *Meet the Press*) to international conflicts (Iranian citizens reporting on the uprising against their repressive government). It occurred to me that there could be classic haiku tweets—three lines consisting of 5 syllables, 7 syllables and 5 syllables—adding up obviously to no more than 140 characters—and so I decided to embed the phrase I coined in the following (also) twaiku:

What’s worth sharing now?
World War Three or stubbed my toe?
I have Twitter’s Block.

My Brother’s Secret Space Communication Projects

When my brother George and I were kids, I could recite the alphabet backwards, whereas he read the entire dictionary. We both played the violin, and when he was nine and I was six, we performed at Carnegie Hall. (I was the youngest concert artist in any field to perform there.) Our younger sister Marge took piano lessons and became a legendary figure at Boys and Girls High School in Brooklyn, teaching music and running the chorus. Now retired, she and two women--one plays the cello, the other a flute—recently performed at the Salvador Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida, playing music connected to various phases of Dali’s life. (She also teaches Tai Chi.)

Marge was the only one in our family who stuck with classical music. Although I was considered a child prodigy, I merely had a technique for playing the violin, but I had a real *passion* for making people laugh. I put my violin in the closet when I was twelve, and several years later I used it essentially as a prop when I began performing stand-up comedy. George went to the High School of Music & Art, and was offered a four-year scholarship at the Juilliard School’s renowned Music Division, but he really preferred Math and Science. He surprised our parents, announcing his decision to be an electrical engineer, but they were supportive.

He turned down the scholarship and instead attended CCNY. "Because," he says, "I thought then that the violin was good for my avocation, not my vocation. With so many brilliant musicians then, you really had to know somebody to get anywhere in that world. It's not like YouTube today." While at CCNY, he played with a square dance group and became Official Fiddler for the New York/New Jersey Square Dance Callers Association. He learned that a caller earned twice as much as he did, so he put down his fiddle and took up calling square dances. He was also captain of the varsity boxing team.

George went to the University of Michigan for his Master's Degree. Our mother insisted–-and to please her-–he mailed his laundry home in a light aluminum case she had purchased for that specific purpose. To pay for his tuition, basement apartment and other expenses, he got a teaching fellowship, was a research assistant, sold programs at football games, and bussed tables at a local restaurant, which he quit when the table he cleared was occupied by fellow students.

He won the all-campus boxing championship, but had to fight in a heavier weight class since no one else weighed as little as he did. "Being a violinist," he said, "I was worried about my hands. But my opponent in the semi-final match was an oboe player with a concert scheduled for the next day, and he asked me to take it easy on his mouth."

* * *

In October 1957, Russia sent Sputnik into space. It was the first orbiting satellite, circling the earth in 96 minutes, and making 1,440 orbits in three months. This astounding technical feat was totally unanticipated by the United States and ignited the era of the space race. At the time, George was working as a civilian scientist for the Army Signal Corps in Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, in charge of the radio relay program. He had been recruited by their senior executive of Research & Development, an alumnus of the University of Michigan.

A week after Sputnik, George sent a proposal to the Commanding General, urging a space communication program. The response: *Do it!* "So," George recalls, "I created the first Space Electronics organization in the country. It was very strange making presentations to generals and top government officials. At age twenty-nine, as head of the Astro-Electronics Division, I had the civilian rank equal to a colonel, but I looked like a young kid. It was embarrassing to take them to lunch and be carded by the waiter."

That wasn’t his only embarrassment: “At the Signal Corps, I accidentally flushed my top secret badge down the toilet. It took a lot of official paperwork and the notation ‘irretrievably lost’ to finally get a new badge. Also, in 1954, the McCarthy paranoia was paramount. I, and fellow civilians--and military personnel, I assume--had to empty our lunchboxes and briefcases for inspection every time we entered the building.”

Five months after he had begun as a civilian scientist, George was drafted. In the army, he was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg in North Carolina. He was a “leg,” though. Instead of jumping out of an airplane, his job was to maintain all radios, phones and electrical equipment. He also started the U.S. Helicopter Square Dance Team to demonstrate the mobility of helicopters. When assigned KP (Kitchen Police), rather than peel potatoes, he scheduled helicopter square dance practice.

Eight months after Sputnik, his team began working on the design of the world’s first communication satellite, SCORE (Signal Communications Orbit Relay Equipment). “There were no reference books, precedents, or Google for information. We were the pioneers. It’s interesting that the first known reference to communication satellites was in a 1945 science-fiction story by the British author, Arthur C. Clarke.”

It took the team only six months to design and build the satellite, which was launched in December 1958 by an Atlas rocket that weighed 9,000 pounds. “The satellite payload became famous for the tape-recorded message from President Dwight Eisenhower, who insisted that this project remain top secret,” George tells me. “He said the launch would be aborted if any word leaked out, because he didn’t want a chance of failure to tarnish our image. As it turned out, one of the two tape recorders did fail, but his Christmas message to the world was the very first transmitted message from space.”

Eisenhower stated: “This is the president of the United States speaking. Through the marvels of scientific advance, my voice is coming to you via a satellite circling in outer space. My message is a simple one. Through this unique means, I convey to you and all mankind America’s wish for peace on earth and good will toward men everywhere.”

* * *

In 1945, in the wake of World War II, the victors launched Operation Paperclip, recruiting a variety of six hundred scientists from Nazi Germany to work in the United States. President Harry Truman ordered the exclusion of any “member of the Nazi Party or an active supporter of Nazi militarism,” but the Joint Intelligence Objectives Agency created false employment and political biographies to circumvent Truman’s command.

Those scientists were then granted security clearance and infiltrated into hospitals, universities, and the aerospace industry, further developing their techniques in propaganda, mind control, and behavior modification. Among them was Wernher von Braun, who had been a member of the Nazi Party and an SS officer who could be linked to the deaths of thousands of concentration camp prisoners. (Fun fact: He married his cousin.) He came to America in 1945 and became a citizen in 1955. He was called the “Father of the U.S. space program.”

In June 1958, by the time those German importees had become entrenched in a slew of American niche communities, I published the first issue of *The Realist*, including a cartoon that depicted the U.S. Army Guided Missile Research Center with a sign in the window, *Help Wanted.* A couple of scientists are standing in front of that building, and one is saying to the other, “They would have hired me only I don't speak German.”

Exactly one year later, Wernher von Braun recruited thirteen scientists to work with him on an ultra-top-secret program, Project Horizon, to build a communication station on the moon. Its purpose was a study to determine the feasibility of constructing a scientific/military base.

"I was one of the lucky thirteen," George remembers. "In fact, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to be a rocket scientist. Von Braun told me that many of his ideas came from science-fiction magazines.

"The project was so secret that the thirteen of us could not even tell our bosses--they didn't have what was called 'need to know.' I would tell [my wife] Judith that I was going to Washington, D.C., and then I would change planes to go to Huntsville, Alabama, where much of the work was done. I made up stories about Washington for her, while I really was in Huntsville, which also was the watercress capital of the world. I'd make up a story about the cherry blossoms, or seeing a senator in the street.

"Unfortunately, when I left the government after nine years (two in the army), I lost my own security rating and need-to-know, so I had no idea if the station was ever built on the moon, and I no longer got cheap watercress." According to Wikipedia, "The permanent outpost was predicted to cost $6 billion and become operational in December 1966. A lunar landing-and-return vehicle would have shuttled up to 16 astronauts at a time to the base and back. Horizon never progressed past the feasibility stage in an official capacity."

However, just like George had lied to Judith, he in turn learned in 2014 that he was lied to about the *actual* purpose of Project Horizon: "[It] was a study to determine the feasibility of constructing a science/military based on the Moon. On June 8, 1959, a group of the Army Ballistic Missile Agency (ABMA) produced for the U.S. Department of the Army a report entitled *Project Horizon, a U.S. Army Study for the Establishment of a Lunar Military Outpost.*

"The project proposal states the requirements as: The lunar outpost is required to develop and protect potential United States interests on the moon; to develop techniques in moon-based surveillance of the earth and space, in communications relay, and in operations on the surface of the moon; to serve on a base for exploration of the moon, for further exploration into space and for military operations on the moon if required; and to support scientific investigations on the moon."

* * *

"When I had been in the Army, I was assigned to work on top secret military and satellite work," George tells me, "the FBI did routine checks. One of our neighbors told Judith that the FBI visited them but were told not to let us know of their inquiries. Apparently, you were on their 'watch list' --based on your 'radical' writings, I assume. I learned from my boss at the Signal Corps that my top-secret clearance was in jeopardy. Granting my clearance took about a month longer than normal, but eventually it was granted.”

Meanwhile, I was placed on the FBI’ s RI (Round-up Index), though I had broken no law. Who knows, maybe it was because I published a cartoon depicting a man sitting at a desk, speaking on the phone: “I'm very sorry, but we of the FBI are powerless to act in a case of oral-genital intimacy unless it has in some way obstructed interstate commerce.”

When *Life* magazine ran a favorable profile of me in 1968, an FBI agent sent a poison-pen letter to the editor: “To classify Krassner as some sort of ‘social rebel’ is far too cute. He's a nut, a raving, unconfined nut.” But in 1969, the FBI's previous attempt at mere character assassination escalated to a more literal approach. This was not included in my own Co-Intel-Pro (Counter-Intelligence Program) files but, rather, a separate FBI project calculated to cause rifts between the black and Jewish communities.

The FBI had produced a WANTED poster featuring a large swastika. In the four square spaces of the swastika were photos of Yippie founders Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin and me, and SDS (Students for a Democratic

Society) leader Mark Rudd. Underneath the swastika was this headline--LAMPSHADES! LAMPSHADES! LAMPSHADES!--and this message:

"The only solution to Negro problems in America would be the elimination of the Jews. May we suggest the following order of elimination? (After all, we've been this way before.) *All Jews connected with the Establishment. *All Jews connected with Jews connected with the Establishment. *All Jews connected with those immediately above. *All Jews except those in the Movement. *All Jews in the Movement except those who dye their skins black. *All Jews. Look out, Abbie, Jerry, Paul and Mark!" (Shades of Wernher von Braun.)

It was approved by FBI director J. Edgar Hoover's top two aides: "Authority is granted to prepare and distribute on an anonymous basis to selected individuals and organizations in the New Left the leaflet submitted. Assure that all necessary precautions are taken to protect the Bureau as the source of these leaflets. This leaflet suggests facetiously the elimination of these leaders." And, of course, if a black militant obtained that flyer and eliminated one of those "New Left leaders who are Jewish," the FBI's bureaucratic ass would be covered: "We *said* it was a facetious suggestion, didn't we?"

On top of that, my name was on a list of sixty-five “radical” campus speakers, released by the House Internal Security Committee. The blacklist was published in the *New York Times*, and picked up by newspapers across the country. It might have been a coincidence, but my campus speaking engagements stopped abruptly.

When I was assigned to write a piece for the *Los Angeles Times*, I titled it “I Was a Comedian for the FBI,” because I mentioned that I had once recognized a pair of FBI agents taking notes while I was performing at the Community Church in New York. My FBI files later stated that I “purported to be humorous about the government.” Since when did taxpayers provide the funds to cover the FBI’ s theater critics squad?

The banner headline on the cover of that *L.A. Times Sunday Calendar* section blared out: ***Paul Krassner-- “I Was a Communist for the FB!.”*** In the *San Francisco Chronicle,* columnist Herb Caen wrote, “Fearing Krassner would sue, the *Times* recalled and destroyed some 300,000 copies at a cost of about $100,000. Krassner would have laughed, not sued.” Or maybe I would've sued *and* laughed my ass off.

* * *

By 1963, George had risen to Chief Scientist, Astro-Electronics Division at the Signal Corps, and McGraw-Hill contacted him, asking if he would write a book. And indeed, he began working on *Introduction to Space Communication*, which became the world' s first book on that subject.

"The problem was the incredible pace of technology," he says. "While I was writing Chapter 5, the nuggets of wisdom in Chapter 2 were becoming obsolete. The last chapter was called 'Ad Astra' (Latin for 'to the stars'), where I tried to forecast future technology. When the book was published in 1964, most of my future projections were already obsolete. Darwin had no idea about the speed of evolution when applied to technology. By the way, more copies of the book were sold in Russia than in the United States."

On George' s last active project, he worked with the original seven astronauts. He was program manager at Simmonds Precision, responsible for the design of the fuel gauging system on the command module where the astronauts were housed. In 1972, Apollo 17, the eleventh manned mission, was the sixth and final lunar landing in the Apollo program. "We were on an extremely tight schedule, and my team worked nearly eighty hours with virtually no sleep to finish on time. We received a rare commendation and bonus from NASA for superior performance ahead of schedule and below budget.”

Gordon Cooper--one of those seven original astronauts—had piloted the longest and final Mercury space flight in 1963, becoming the first American to sleep in orbit. “He gave me a rare souvenir,” George reminds me, “a dehydrated oatmeal cookie the size of a large dice that he had on a space mission. During a family dinner, I passed around the cookie for everyone to see. Dad was hard of hearing and didn’t hear the story, so he popped the space cookie into his mouth, and it was gone before I could get any words out of my mouth. It was pure grief when it happened, but funny now.”

As I write this in 2014, George is 85, and if a movie were to be made about him, he’d like to be portrayed by Matt Damon. In October 1988, he was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer and given three years to live, but his daughter Devra, a naturopath, convinced him to meet with a macrobiotic counselor, and overnight he changed his diet and lifestyle. Now it’s twenty-six years later.

He played tennis until six months ago, when he discontinued after a bad fall, because he was playing too aggressively. Currently, his exercise consists of taking walks and lifting dumbbells, though not simultaneously. He remains active, doing business seminars for adult education, providing legal plans for families, small businesses and employees, and calling square dances. But not for helicopters. Or drones.

The Six Dumbest Decisions of My Life

I’ m talking here about seriously dumb decisions, not those minor regrets like that time in 1970 when *Esquire* magazine assigned me to fly to New Mexico where director Monte Hellman was filming *Two-Lane Blacktop,* about street-racing. Among the actors was a pair of musicians, James Taylor as a driver, and Dennis Wilson as a mechanic. They both agreed to be interviewed, besides screenwriter Rudy Wurlitzer and others.

During a conversation with Taylor about not laughing at jokes, he said, “My brother once told me a joke that made me laugh.”

“Wait, don’ t tell me now,” I said. “Let’ s save it for the interview.”

However, I was supposed to reveal behind the scenes of making the movie, but I learned that there were a couple of violations of law: A few members of the cast had been tripping on magic mushrooms; and a 17-year-old actress, Laurie Bird, who played “The Girl,” had sex with two members of the crew. Nine years later she would commit suicide.

Anyway, I decided not to write the article--I was a reporter, not a snitch–-and never did get a chance to do any interviews. Nor did I ever hear the joke that James Taylor’ s brother told him and made him laugh. I was mildly disappointed, but what follows are half a dozen of my really dangerous dumb decisions that continue to make me humble.

1. Early one morning in 1963, at my tiny apartment on the Lower East Side of New York (now the East Village), I was in bed with a young woman I had met at a party, when the phone rang. It was her boyfriend, a lower-echelon Mafioso. He asked if I knew where she was. I told him no, even as she was cuddling next to me. He said he would check his source and call me right back. A few minutes later, he did.

"You were seen with her last night. You spent the night with her. She didn't come home last night. You *punk!*"

He said that he was coming to my office a few blocks away–-which is where he thought he was calling me–-to talk about it. I told her she'd better leave, and I rushed to the office, but he was already waiting outside the "Mad building" [where *MAD* magazine was published], peering through the locked outside door into the lobby, expecting the elevator door to open and me to step out and open the door for him. Instead he saw me on the sidewalk coming toward him.

"What are you doing out here?" he said.

"Well, I came out just a minute ago, but you weren't here."

"I was calling you up because you didn't come out."

“Oh–-I figured you had the address wrong, so I took a walk around the block.”

“Let's go to your apartment.”

“Don't you want to come up to my office?”

“I said. ‘Let's go to your apartment.’ ”

“You don't expect to find her *there?*”

“She leaves traces wherever she goes. By the way, do you have a telephone at your apartment?”

“Oh, yeah, well, it happens to be the same number as my office, incidentally.”

There was a certain tension between us while we were walking to my apartment.

“Tell me,” he said, “do you have many friends who smoke Tareyton cigarettes?”

I suddenly realized what he meant by “She leaves traces.” At the apartment, she was gone, but the bed was unmade and he couldn't help but notice the semen stain on the sheet. Which, of course, was no proof that it was *she* who had been there. However, the ashtray was filled with Tareyton cigarette butts.

“Do *you* smoke Tareytons?”

“No,” I answered, “I don't smoke *any* cigarettes.”

“I guess I caught you with your pants down, didn't I?”

He picked up the phone and dialed a number. He was calling her mother. “I found him,” he said. “What should I do, throw 'im out the window?” I was scared that he might actually do it. He hung up the phone and I didn't know what to expect. I thought, *How could a realist have gotten himself into such an unrealistic situation?*

We proceeded to have a discussion.

“I got the *horns*,” he yelled. “I gotta *do* something! It ain't *manly!*"

“Look, restraint itself can be a form of manliness.”

“You know,” he said, “I could arrange to have you killed while I was having dinner with your mother and father.”

“Well, actually, they're not having too many people over to the house these days.”

His low chuckle in response to that wisecrack marked a positive turning point in our conversation. He finally forgave me, and we shook hands. Then he borrowed twenty dollars, which we both knew I would never get back, but it was worth not being thrown out the window. I had known he was her boyfriend, and so I vowed never to risk sleeping with a gangster’ s girlfriend, especially if she smoked cigarettes;

2. In 1979, I covered the trial of Dan White,)who had assassinated two progressive government officials in San Francisco--Mayor George Moscone (in 1975, as a state senator, he authored a bill to decriminalize marijuana) and Supervisor Harvey Milk (a dedicated gay activist)—and yet, after an incompetent prosecution and a shrewd defense, White was sentenced to only seven years.

That evening, I was unwinding at home, smoking a joint and preparing to write my final report for the *Bay Guardian*. My reverie was suddenly interrupted by a phone call from Mike Weiss. We had become friends during the trial, which he had covered for *Time* and *Rolling Stone*. He was calling from a phone booth across the street from City Hall. I could hear crowds screaming and sirens wailing behind his voice.

He had to yell: “There’ s a riot going on! You should get here right away!”

Reluctantly, I took a cab. When I arrived at Civic Center, there were a dozen police cars that had been set on fire, which in turn set off their alarms, underscoring the shouts from a mob of 5,000 gay protesters. On the night that Milk was murdered, they had been among the 30,000 who marched silently to City Hall for a candlelight vigil. Now they were in the middle of a post-verdict riot, utterly furious.

But where were the cops? They were all fuming *inside* City Hall--where their commander had instructed them to stay–-armed prisoners watching helplessly as angry demonstrators broke the glass trying to ram their way through the locked doors.

I spotted Weiss and a student from his magazine-writng class, Marilee Strong. The three of us circulated through the crowd. Standing in the middle of the intersection, *Chronicle* columnist Warren Hinckle was talking with a police official, and he beckoned me to join them. I gathered from their conversation that the cops were about to be released from City Hall. Some were already out. One kept banging his baton on the phone booth where Weiss was calling in his story, and he had to wave his press card before the cop would leave.

I found Marilee and suggested that we get away from the area. As we walked north on Polk Street, the police were beginning to march slowly in formation not too far behind us. But the instant they were out of view from City Hall, they broke ranks and started running toward us, hitting the metal pole of a bus stop with their billy clubs, making loud, scary *clangs*.

"We better run," I told Marilee.

"Why? They're not gonna hit us."

"Yes, they are! Run! Hurry!"

The police had been let out of their cage and they were absolutely enraged. Marilee got away, but I was struck with a nightstick on the outside of my right knee. I fell to the ground. The cop ran off to injure as many other cockroaches in his kitchen as he could. Another cop came charging and he yelled at me, *"Get up! Get up!"*

"I'm trying to!"

He made a threatening gesture with his billy club, and when I tried to protect my head with my arms, he jabbed me viciously on the exposed right side of my ribs. *Oh, God, the pain!* The cops were running amuck now, in an orgy of indiscriminate sadism, swinging their clubs wildly and screaming, *"Get the fuck outa here, you fuckin' faggots, you motherfuckin' cocksuckers!"*

I managed to drag myself along the sidewalk. It felt like an electric cattle prod was stuck between my ribs. Marilee drove me to a hospital emergency ward. X-rays indicated that I had a fractured rib and a punctured lung.

The City of San Francisco was sued for $4.3 million by a man who had been a peaceful observer at the riot following the verdict. He was walking away from the Civic Center area when a cop yelled, *"We' re gonna kill all you faggots!"* –-and beat him on the head with his nightstick. He was awarded $125,000.

I had wanted to sue the city, but an attorney requested $75 for a filing fee, and I didn' t have it. I was too foolish not to borrow it, and I decided to forego the lawsuit. I must' ve been crazy.

3. In 1985, after living in San Francisco for sixteen years, I moved to a walk street in Venice, a block-and-a-half walk to the beach. I rented a top-floor tiny two-room apartment consisting of a kitchen/office where I could see the ocean and a living-room/bedroom which came with a convertible sofa. The bathroom had a bathtub/shower.

One afternoon, I took a bus to Santa Monica to eat at a little soul-food restaurant in a food court and to see a Woody Allen movie. When I returned home, I walked up the steps to the top floor, and when I opened the door to my "penthouse" apartment, it was filled with smoke. I had stupidly, utterly recklessly, left a candle burning in a glass ashtray on the arm of the sofa. I didn' t *forget* to do that. I *chose* to leave it that way.

The ashtray had broken in half from the heat, and the sofa was burning, although asbestos material had prevented it from being on fire in a way that would spread the flames. I ran down the steps and got the fire extinguisher off the wall in the hall, ran back up and sprayed the sofa.

"You should be ashamed of yourself," I said to myself.

I was grateful that only the sofa had been destroyed. Also, my pride in expanded consciousness had disintegrated. I've never quite forgiven myself for having endangered the lives and property of the tenants in the other four apartments. I had ignored the concept of cause and effect. My bad. Immensely.

4. On the morning of April 1st, 1995, I flew to San Francisco. I was scheduled to emcee a benefit for Jack Kerouac's daughter, Jan, who had been on dialysis treatment for the last few years. On that sunny afternoon, I was stoned in Washington Square Park, wearing the *MAD* magazine jacket that my daughter Holly had given me for Christmas. The smiling face of Alfred E. Neuman--stating his renowned philosophy, "What--me worry?" --graced the back of my jacket

I was waiting for the arrival of the annual Saint Stupid Day Parade, led this year by Grand Marshal Ken Kesey in an open-topped convertible.

The event was sponsored by the First Church of the Last Laugh. Their sound equipment was surrounded by yellow plastic tape warning, *" Police Line--Do Not Cross."* Somebody in a clown costume handed me a three-foot section of that tape.

The celebration featured music, comedy and a traditional free brunch, along with such favorite rituals as the Sock Exchange and the Leap of Faith. Kesey was also in town to speak at the benefit, which was held only because Jan happened to be the daughter of a ground-breaking literary celebrity, even though he had abandoned her mother when she was pregnant with Jan.

I said to my friend Julius, who drove me there, "It' s not enough any more just to be a sperm donor."

Jan had met her father only twice. The first time, she was nine. The second time, six years later, he sat there, drinking a fifth of whiskey and watching *The Beverly Hillbillies.* Jan would eventually die of kidney failure at the age of forty-four, never having fulfilled her fantasy of becoming drinking buddies with her father, who died when she was a teenager.

Now, backstage, someone I knew handed me a baggie of what I assumed to be marijuana. I thanked her and put it in my pocket. Ah, yes, one of the perks of the benefit biz. Later, as the final members of the audience were straggling out of the theater, I was sitting with Julius in his car in the parking area at Fort Mason Center.

He was busy rolling a joint in a cigar-box on the dashboard with the map light on. There was a police car circling around in the distance, but we unwisely ignored it. Suddenly, a moment later, there was a fist knocking heavily on the passenger-side window, and a flashlight shining in my eyes. Shit! Fuck! Caught!

We were ordered outside and, with our arms outstretched against the side of the car, with the face of Alfred E. Neuman smiling at the cop and asking, "What--me worry?" And indeed, the cop was worried. He asked me if I had anything sharp in my pockets.

"Because," he explained, "I'm gonna get very mad if I get stuck," obviously referring to a hypodermic needle.

"No," I said, "there's only a pen in this pocket" --gesturing toward the left with my head-- "and keys in that one."

He found the coiled-up three feet of yellow plastic tape warning "*Police Line--Do Not Cross,*" and said, "Where'd you get this?"

"At the Saint Stupid Day Parade."

"What's it for?"

"To keep people away."

But then he found the baggie. And, to my surprise, it contained magic mushrooms. He examined the contents. Then, reeking with sarcasm, he said, “So you like mushrooms, huh?” Under the circumstances, it was such a ridiculous question that I almost laughed, but I realized that, from his point of view, this was a serious offense.

Julius was given a $50 citation for possession of marijuana, but I was arrested on the spot, handcuffed behind my back, and my Miranda rights were read to me. I stood there, heart pounding fast and mouth terminally dry, trying to keep my balance on the cusp of reality and unreality. Fortunately, attorney Doron Weinberg got me off with a $100 fine and nothing on my permanent record.

But I finally understood what that cop meant when he snarled, “So you like mushrooms, huh?” His question was asked with such archetypal hostility that it kept reverberating inside my head. *So you like mushrooms, huh?* It was not as though I had done anything that might harm another human being. This was simply an authority figure’s need to control. But control what? My pleasure? Or was it deeper than that?

What was his *actual* message? Back through eons of ancestors--all the way back to what psychedelic researcher Terence McKenna called “the *un*stoned apes”--this cop was continuing a never-ending attempt to maintain the status quo. He had unintentionally revealed the true nature of the threat he perceived. What he *really* said to me was, “So you like the evolution of human consciousness, huh?”

“Well, yeah,” I thought, “now that you mention it, I do. I mean, when you put it like that--*So you like the evolution of human consciousness, huh?*--sure, I do. I like it a whole lot.” Too bad I had remained silent instead of using my instinct and advising Julius, “Let’s get the hell out of here.”

5. Once, in the men’s room at an airport, I couldn’t help but notice a man standing at a urinal a urinals away from the one where I was carefully aiming my stream with my left hand onto the round marzipan-like disinfectant. But he was allowing his penis to aim itself, because he happened to be busy using both hands to floss his teeth. It was a monument to multi-tasking.

I’m embarrassed to admit that, rather then flossing, I would use a dollar bill to clean between my teeth. Instead, I was actually *adding* bacteria to my mouth, thereby giving a new, literal meaning to the concept of “dirty money.” As a result, my teeth were in terrible shape.

I had known better. Back in 1971, publisher Stewart Brand had invited Ken Kesey and me to co-edit *The Last Supplement to the Whole Earth Catalog.* Our managing editor, Hassler (Ron Bevirt’s Merry Prankster name), introduced me to the fine art of flossing.

“I began cleaning between my teeth with dental floss, and then brushing carefully after every meal for the last nine years,” he told me. “Dental floss is really important because it removes particles of food from between the teeth that can’t be dislodged by the brush. It’s this crap *between* the teeth that really causes decay.”

Although I didn’t practice what he preached, I immediately assigned him to write a piece about the process of flossing for *The Last Supplement*. After all, the *Whole Earth Catalog* was devoted to informing its readers about a variety of New Age tools. And floss was definitely a useful tool. “Floss comes in two thicknesses,” Hassler wrote. “Thin, called Dental Floss; and thick, called Dental Tape. Recently, I found Dental Floss Unwaxed. All the floss and tape I’ve used in the past were waxed. I find that I prefer the waxed because it slips in and out between my teeth cleanly without leaving any of the floss behind, which I find to be a problem with unwaxed floss. I’ve realized the importance of my teeth in the service of my habit. Munch, slurp, slobber, drool…”

In 1987, I was a keynote speaker at the annual International Society for Humor Studies conference, held in Tempe, Arizona. I had dinner with a group of five staffers from the Russian humor magazine *Krokodil* at the Holiday Inn. They all ordered the specialty of the house—pork ribs—which came with huge bibs. The editor was given a bib with the words “Miss America” on it. The art director got a bib with a big iconic “S” for Superman.

They were really getting a dose of our culture. As we walked along the salad bar, one of the Russians stopped at the corn chowder and asked me, “Is this typical American soup?” As the others gathered around, I didn’t quite know how to answer. “I’m sorry, I don’t know,” I said. “I’m sure it’s typical *somewhere* in the country.” And then I remembered that multi-tasking man at the airport urinal. “In America,” I told the Russian, “corn chowder comes with dental floss that has little pieces of corn embedded in it, so if you get hungry between meals you can floss and have a snack at the same time.”

A few years before I met my wife, Nancy, she had gone to a dentist who required all new patients to take a two-session course in flossing and oral health. Only when he was satisfied that patients would be capable of caring for their teeth properly would he then make their first cleaning appointment. Nancy learned the technique, and recently a friend named her “the Floss Queen.” We came across an ad stating that “If you follow a vegan diet, you may opt for Eco-Dent’s GentleFloss, which uses beeswax instead of animal products.” Who knew?

The irony behind all this is that Medicare doesn’t cover any dental procedures, even though dentists emphasize how bad teeth can cause illness in other, internal parts of the body. For example, a research team from Columbia University’s School of Public Health released the results of a three-year study of 420 men and women, concluding that the improvement of gum health can help slow the development of atherosclerosis, the build-up of cholesterol-rich plaque along artery walls, which can lead to heart attacks and strokes.

I still regret that I would eat candy without flossing afterward. Especially a Clark Bar, which could cause a cavity *and* fill it simultaneously.

6. I had taped an interview on an electric recorder-transcriber, plus a battery-operated cassette recorder as a back-up precaution, which turned out to be an absolute necessity when the electric recorder conked out right in the middle.

Later on, I bought a new one to replace it, but first I had to get rid of the old one. My desk consisted of a wooden door supported by a couple of two-drawer filing cabinets. I was just too damn lazy to take all the equipment and books off the desk so that I could move the desk toward me and pull up the wire from behind it.

So I simply cut the wire with a pair of scissors. *Bzzzzzt!!!* I was shocked, but not injured. Though the recorder had conked out, I had incredibly left the wire still plugged into a socket on the surge protector. Where the scissors had cut the wire, parts of the metal had melted away just a couple of inches from my hand. I might’ ve been electrocuted. *Yikes!*

I could’ ve been killed, and the cause would’ ve been a simple lack of the practice of mindfulness that I treasure so much. Instead, I had *emptied* my mind. Oops, wrong discipline. But I was still alive, and I thanked God for that. And then I heard a resplendent voice booming through the clouds: *“SHUT UP, YOU SUPERSTITIOUS FOOL!* “

Alternative Facts

Between the choice of a one-man-one-vote (Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia) and fake news of Weapons of Mass Destruction, invasion of Iraq, and horror of ISIS, George Bush was elected president in the year 2000. It was due to the electoral college (a rigged system which originally intended to prevent slaves from voting and evolved to gerrymandering), even though Bush's opponent, Al Gore, won the national popular vote.

Hillary Clinton was elected senator that year, and she announced that the first thing she would do was to get rid of the electoral college. A few years later, as a columnist for the *New York Press*, I sent her a letter asking about the status of that promise. She didn't reply.

On November 8, 2016, a crooked businessman, liar extraordinaire, bragging pussy-grabber, make-America-white-again, anti-choice, anti-Semite, false Christian, climate-change hoaxer, Nobamacare, homophobic, apprentice politician, fascist tweets, and Vladimir Putin's "useful idiot," namely Donald Trump, who was elected as an insanely narcissistic dictator based on the electoral college, whereas his opponent, Hillary Clinton, won the national popular vote by "more than three million" individuals.

Irony lives.

But an incredibly mean monster inadvertently awakened a sleeping population to counteract the essence of evil with love, laughs, and law, fueled by the aid of true news. Incidentally, Putin had 88 journalists murdered. No wonder Trump told him, “It’s an honor to be with you.” Now Putin wanted Obama’s new sanctions on Russia to be reprieved.

National Security Adviser Michael Flynn had discussed it with the Russian ambassador a month before Trump took office. Although General Flynn joined his campaign and shared criminal secrets, he denied them to the FBI. It was a felony offense. The Justice Department warned Trump that Flynn had misled Mike Pence, and that Flynn could be vulnerable to blackmail. Trump asked Flynn to resign, and yet he offered his job back when he got out of prison. Why? Because Flynn was the scapegoat, taking the fall for the president and vice-president. He preferred a trial with immunity since they knew all. Pence said Flynn lied and *that* was a lie.

If Trump and Pence were both to be kicked out of the White House, the next in line would be the Speaker of the House, Paul Ryan. Steve Bannon described him as “a limp-dick motherfucker who was born in a petri dish at the Heritage Foundation.” In turn, Trunp’s communicator Anthony Scaramucci boasted, “I’m not Steve Bannon, I’m not trying to suck my own cock.” Ah, but Bannon said he wanted to *destroy* Ryan.

Hallelujah!

Trump once tried to patent “You’re fired.” Professional hater Bannon resigned. Back to running his *Breitbart News.* He had taken over the original right-wing website, *Breitbart.com,* after the death of editor Andrew Breitbart, who ironically was adopted and raised as a proud Jew.

Orson Bean is my oldest living friend. He became a Christian libertarian conservative, and we’ve had an ongoing email dialogue about religion, but he’s still a Christian and I’m still an atheist. Not a militant atheist, as I used to be, though. I changed when I realized that Martin Luther King was a Christian, yet I was inspired by his actions, and George Lincoln Rockwell, head of the American Nazi Party, was an agnostic, yet I abhorred what he stood for. It no longer mattered to me what anybody’s religious belief was, only how they treated others. Either kind or cruel. That simple.

I decided to email Orson: “If you can arrange for me to interview Andrew Breitbart”--his son-in-law--“I’ll believe in God.” Orson must’ve forwarded my email to Breitbart, because *he* sent me an email saying, “Apparently there is a God,” with his own phone number. I called, we spoke, and he agreed to do an interview. My only ground rule would be that neither of us would interrupt the other. I contacted Steve Randall, my editor at *Playboy,* and I got the assignment. I immediately sent an email to Orson with the good news. The Subject line was “Praise the fucking Lord.” Amen.

I Played Thomas Jefferson’s Violin

At a unique Heroes Convention, I met Lindsay Wagner, star of *The Bionic Woman.* She was unaware that the CIA served as technical adviser to her series, but she spoke poignantly of the positive influence that her TV alter-ego had on young amputees she visited in hospitals.

I also met Tom Laughlin, of *Billy Jack* movie fame. A couple of years later, he and his wife Delores Taylor invited me to a large dinner party.

They were Thomas Jefferson enthusiasts. In their home, there was Thomas Jefferson's furniture, Thomas Jefferson's silverware, Thomas Jefferson's recipes--we started with peanut soup--and even Thomas Jefferson's violin.

I mentioned playing the violin as a child, and Laughlin invited me to play this one. I hadn't held a violin for twenty-five years, not since I had used it as a prop when I started doing stand-up comedy, and four decades had passed since that concert in Carnegie Hall. It felt like a previous incarnation. But now Billy Jack himself was handing me Thomas Jefferson's violin. How could I resist?

“I'd like to dedicate this to Thomas Jefferson's slaves,” I said.

And then I played the only thing I felt competent enough to perform-- "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." While I was playing, I stood and, as unobtrusively as possible, balancing on my left foot, I scratched my left leg with my right foot.

It was a private joke between me and the god of Absurdity.

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Text Sets

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Introducing *Nautilus* Education

The modern world has placed an unprecedented emphasis on science literacy. But most existing science texts do not emphasize literacy, and most literary texts don't have science.

This *Nautilus* Education text set pamphlet is a beta product intended to fill this gap. It contains three groups of articles from the award-winning science magazine, *Nautilus*, each accompanied by lesson plans and guides for teachers.

Key science concepts like genetics and astronomy are explored through narrative story telling and tailor-made artwork, letting science spill over its usual borders, and waking the imagination and interest of the student. This kind of literary science classroom material was designed to helps teachers satisfy the new U.S. common core and next gen standards but have global application. The relevant standards are listed in each lesson plan.

Nautilus is looking for partners interested in using and further developing this kind of content. For more information, please write to education@nautil.us.

—Michael Segal
Editor-in-Chief

About Nautilus Magazine

Nautilus is a new kind of science magazine. Each monthly issue tackles a single topic in contemporary science using multiple vantage points, from biology and physics to culture and philosophy. We are science, connected.

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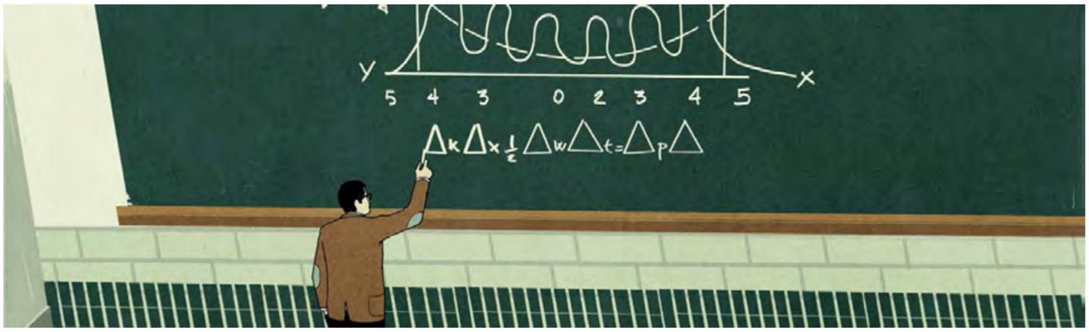
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Astronomy & Space Travel

How would we travel nearly five light years? This article explores different engineering solutions to the puzzle of taking a very, very, long trip, intertwining science-fiction goals with real world solutions. Students will explore fanciful applications of Newton's second law, and concepts of momentum, ions, and nuclear fusion.

Lesson Plan

Review vocabulary words in class. Have students read the article and answer the reading comprehension questions for homework, as well as generate a discussion question of their own. In class, address any conceptual questions that the class might have. Have students write discussion questions on the board, along with the ones suggested in this document. Have students break up into small groups, each of which should address one of the discussion questions. **15 MIN**

Dedicate the remaining class time to completing one of the activities. **30-45 MIN**

Teacher's Notes: Roadmap to Alpha Centauri

VOCAB WORDS

Magnetic field: produced by a magnetic material or a current, a magnetic field will push or pull a moving charge or magnet that comes in contact with it.

Ion: an atom in which the number of electrons and protons is unequal—thus, the atom is positive or negative.

Momentum: the product of the mass and velocity of an object.

Recoil: the backward momentum from a fired gun.

Plasma: one of the four fundamental states of matter, composed of ions and electrons.

Nuclear fusion: when two or more clusters of neutrons and protons collide, forming a new nucleus and releasing energy.

READING COMPREHENSION

1. What does AU stand for?
2. How fast is Voyager 1 moving in miles per hour?
3. "The engine first strips propellant atoms [typically xenon] of their outermost electrons." What is the charge of a stripped xenon atom?

4. What concept is at work in the ion drive? (Hint: what is conserved?)
5. What other travel options work on this principle?
6. How much momentum does an electron fired from a gun have?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why not take a traditional rocket to Alpha Centauri?
2. Which of the propulsion meturds listed is most likely to succeed? Would any be used together?
3. Would it be worth going if it took generations?
4. How far away is the next-nearest star?

ACTIVITIES

1. Research and create a brochure or ad enticing astronauts to make the trip. What would they eat? What psychological qualities would they need? If robots were sent, how would they be fixed? What kind of data could they expect to collect?
2. Propose another method of traveling to Alpha Centauri.

ADDITIONAL MULTIMEDIA

1. ***Voyager 1 Leaves the Solar System***
   (The Guardian) **1 MIN 45 SEC**
   A quick explanation of where Voyager 1 is, and how scientists know its location: http://www.theguardian.com/science/video/2013/sep/13/voyager-1-leaves-solar-system-video
2. ***New Mars Rover Powered by Plutonium***
   (Space.com) **2 MIN 30 SEC**
   An introduction to the nuclear battery on board the Mars Curiosity Rover, and the advantages of not using solar power (as with past missions): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1JOPW8aAcgEt

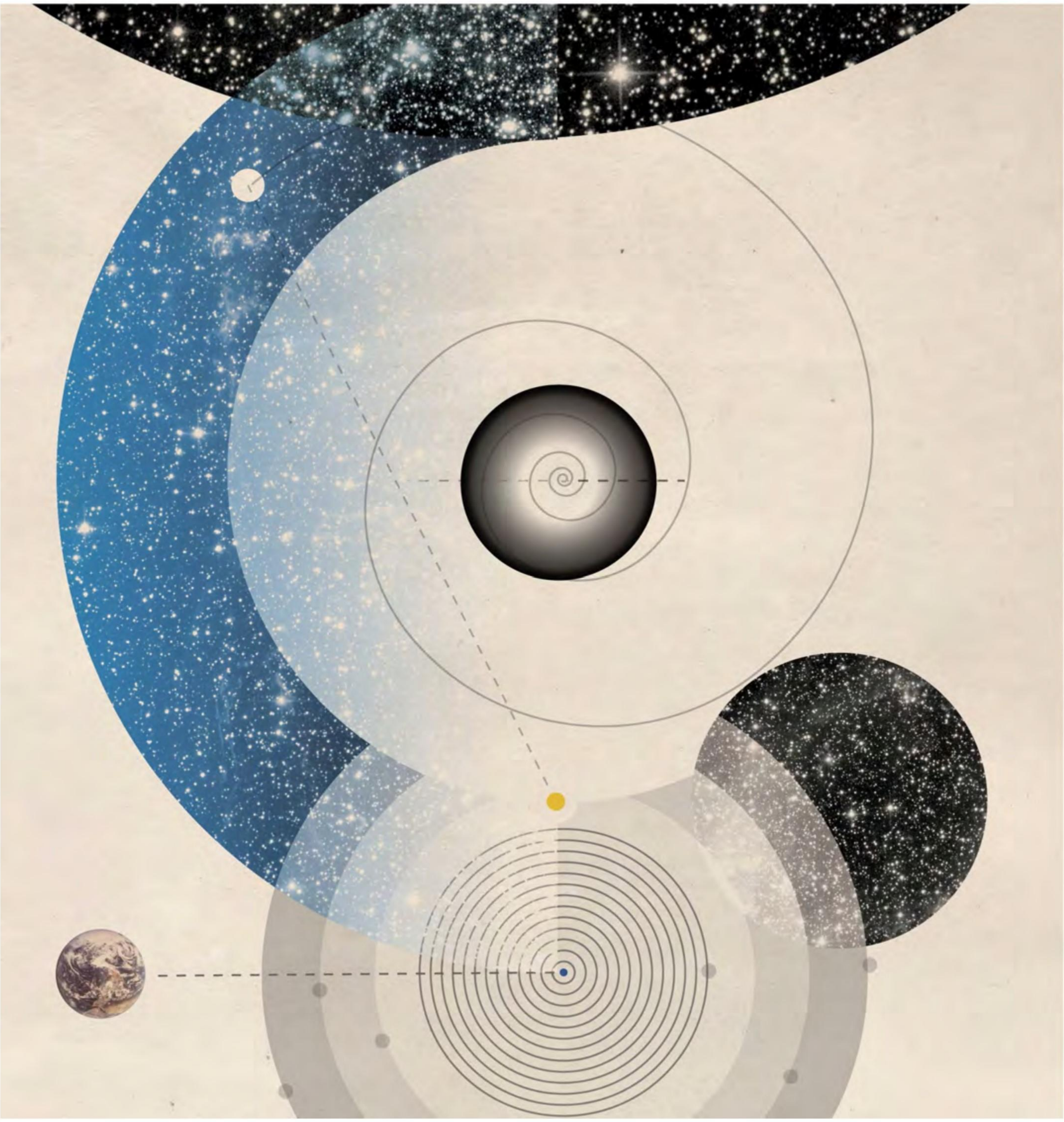
WHERE THIS FITS IN THE CURRICULUM

Structure and Properties of Matter (HS-PS1-8) Develop models to illustrate the changes in the composition of the nucleus of the atom and the energy released during the processes of fission, fusion, and radioactive decay.

Forces and Interactions (HS-PS2-1) Analyze data to support the claim that Newton's second law of motion describes the mathematical relationship among the net force on a macroscopic object, its mass, and its acceleration.

Forces and Interactions (HS-PS2-2) Use mathematical representations to support the claim that the total momentum of a system of objects is conserved when there is no net force on the system.

Engineering Design (HS-ETS1-3) Evaluate a solution to a complex real-world problem based on prioritized criteria and trade-offs that account for a range of constraints, including cost, safety, reliability, and aesthetics, as well as possible social, cultural, and environmental impacts.



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Roadmap to Alpha Centauri

Pick your favorite travel mode—big, small, light, dark, or twisted

BY GEORGE MUSSER

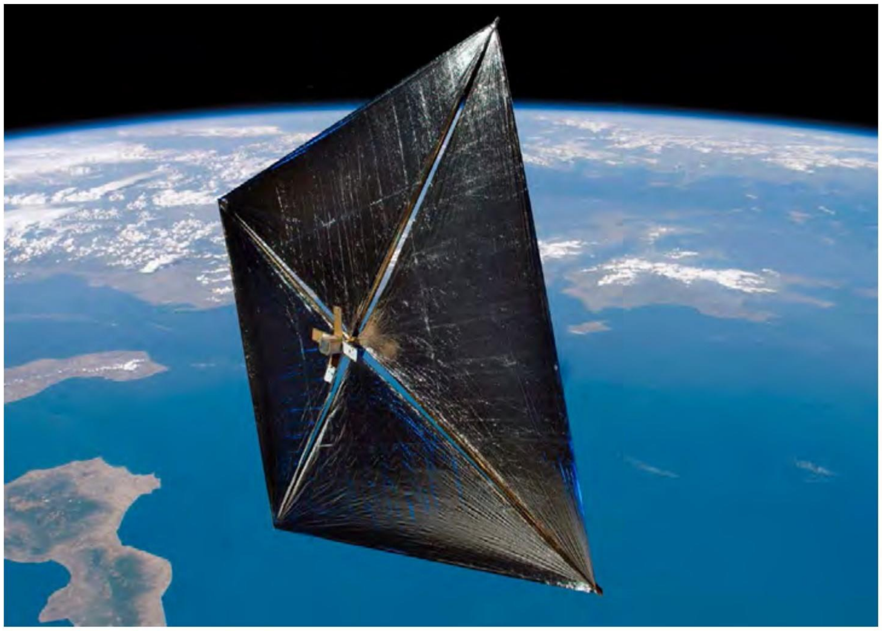
EVER SINCE THE DAWN of the space age, a quixotic subculture of physicists, engineers, and science-fiction writers have devoted their lunch hours and weekends to drawing up plans for starships, propelled by the imperative for humans to crawl out of our Earthly cradle. For most of that time, they focused on the physics. Can we really fly to the stars? Many initially didn't think so, but now we know it's possible. Today, the question is: *Will* we?

Truth is, we already *are* flying to the stars, without really meaning to. The twin Voyager space probes launched in 1977 have endured long past their original goal of touring the outer planets and have reached the boundaries of the sun's realm. Voyager 1 is 124 astronomical units (AU) away from the sun—that is, 124 times farther out than Earth—and clocking 3.6 AU per year. Whether it has already exited the solar system depends on your definition of "solar system," but it is certainly way beyond the planets. Its instruments have witnessed the energetic particles and magnetic fields of the sun give way to those of interstellar space—finding, among other things, what Ralph McNutt, a Voyager team member and planetary scientist, describes as "weird plasma structures" begging to be explored. The mysteries encountered by the Voyagers compel scientists to embark on follow-up missions that venture even deeper into the cosmic woods—out to 200 AU and beyond. But what kind of spacecraft can get us there?

Going Small: Ion Drives

NASA's Dawn probe to the asteroid belt has demonstrated one leading propulsion system: the ion drive. An ion drive is like a gun that fires atoms rather than bullets; the ship moves forward on the recoil. The system includes a tank of propellant, typically xenon, and a power source, such as solar panels or plutonium batteries. The engine first strips propellant atoms of their outermost electrons, giving them a positive electric charge. Then, on the principle that opposites attract,

ILLUSTRATION BY CHAD HAGEN



a negatively charged grid draws the atoms toward the back of the ship. They overshoot the grid and stream off into space at speeds 10 times faster than chemical rocket exhaust (and 100 times faster than a bullet). For a post-Voyager probe, ion engines would fire for 15 years or so and hurl the craft to several times the Voyagers' speed, so that it could reach a couple of hundred AU before the people who built it died.

Star flight enthusiasts are also pondering ion drives for a truly interstellar mission, aiming for Alpha Centauri, the nearest star system some 300,000 AU away. Icarus Interstellar, a nonprofit foundation with a mission to achieve interstellar travel by the end of the century, has dreamed up Project Tin Tin—a tiny probe weighing less than 10 kilograms, equipped with a miniaturized high-performance ion drive. The trip would still take tens of thousands of years, but the group sees Tin Tin less as a realistic science mission than as a technology demonstration.

Going Light: Solar Sails

A solar sail, such as the one used by the Japanese IKAROS probe to Venus, does away with propellant and engines altogether. It exploits the physics of light. Like anything else in motion, a light wave has momentum and pushes on whatever surface it strikes. The force is feeble, but becomes noticeable if you have a large enough surface, a low mass, and a lot of time. Sunlight can accelerate a large sheet of lightweight material, such as Kapton, to an impressive speed. To reach the velocity needed to escape the solar system, the craft would first swoop toward the sun, as close as it dared—inside the orbit of Mercury—to fill its sails with lusty sunlight.

Such sail craft could conceivably make the crossing to Alpha Centauri in a thousand years. Sails are limited in speed by how close they can get to the sun, which, in turn, is limited by the sail material's durability. Gregory Matloff, a City University of New York professor and longtime interstellar travel proponent, says the most promising potential material is graphene—ultrathin layers of carbon graphite.

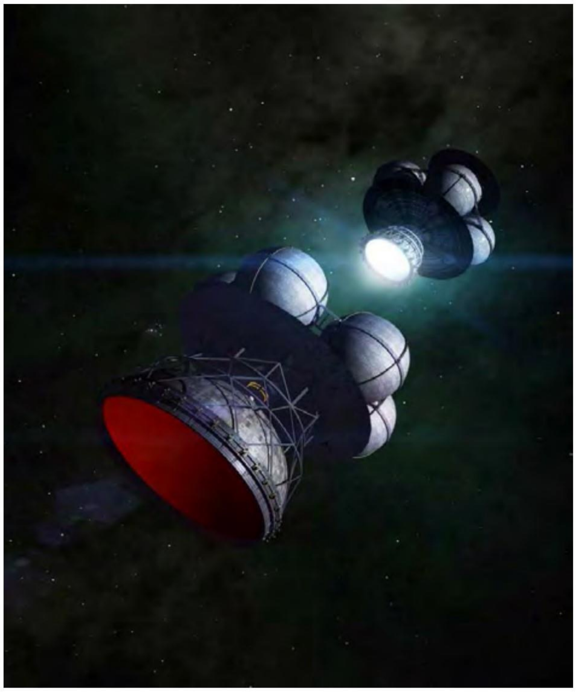
A laser or microwave beam could provide an even more muscular push. In the mid-1980s, the doyen of interstellar travel, Robert Forward, suggested piggybacking on an idea popular at the time: solar-power satellites, which would collect solar energy in orbit and beam it down to Earth by means of microwaves. Before commencing operation, an orbital power station could pivot and beam its power up rather than down. A 10-gigawatt station could accelerate an ultralight sail—a mere 16 grams—to one-fifth the speed of light within a week. Two decades later, we'd start seeing live video from Alpha Centauri.

This "Starwisp" scheme has its dubious features—it would require an enormous lens, and the sail is so fragile that the beam would be as likely to fry it as to push it—but it showed that we could reach the stars within a human lifetime.

Going Big: Nuclear Rockets

Sails may be able to whisk tiny probes to the stars, but they can't handle a human mission; you'd need a microwave beam consuming thousands of times more power than the entire world currently generates. The best-developed scheme for human space travel is nuclear pulse propulsion, which the government-funded Project Orion worked on during the 1950s and '60s.

When you first hear about it, the scheme sounds unhinged. Load your starship with 300,000 nuclear bombs, detonate one every three seconds, and ride the blast waves. Though extreme, it works on the same basic principle as any other rocket—namely, recoil. Instead of shooting atoms out the back of the rocket, the nuclear-pulse system shoots blobs of plasma, such as fireballs of tungsten.



You pack a plug of tungsten along with a nuclear weapon into a metal capsule, fire the capsule out the back of the ship, and set it off a short distance away. In the vacuum of space, the explosion does less damage than you might expect. Vaporized tungsten hurtles toward the ship, rebounds off a thick metal plate at the ship's rear, and shoots into space, while the ship recoils, thereby moving forward. Giant shock absorbers lessen the jolt on the crew quarters. Passengers playing 3-D chess, or doing whatever else interstellar passengers do, would feel rhythmic thuds like kids jumping rope in the apartment upstairs.

The ship might reach a tenth the speed of light. If for some reason—solar explosion, alien invasion—we really had to get off the planet fast and we didn't care about nuking the launch pad, this would be the way to go. We already have everything we need for it. "Today the closest technology we have would be nuclear pulse," Matloff says. If anything, most people would be happy to load up all our nukes on a ship and be rid of them.

Ideally, the bomb blasts would be replaced with controlled nuclear fusion reactions. That was the approach suggested by Project Daedalus, a '70s-era effort to design a fully equipped robotic interstellar vessel. The biggest problem was that for every ton of payload, the ship would have to carry 100 tons of fuel. Such a behemoth would be the size of a battleship, with a length of 200 meters and a mass of 50,000 tons.

"It was just a huge, monstrous machine," says Kelvin Long, an English aerospace engineer and co-founder of Project Icarus, a modern effort to update the design. "But what's happened since then, of course, is microelectronics, miniaturization of technology, nanotechnology. All these developments have led to a rethinking. Do you really need these massive structures?" He says Project Icarus planned to unveil the new design in London in October 2013.

Interstellar designers have come up with all sorts of ways to shrink the fuel tank. For instance, the ship could use electric or magnetic fields to scoop up hydrogen gas from interstellar space. The hydrogen would then be fed into a fusion reactor. The faster the ship were to go, the faster it would scoop—a virtuous cycle that, if maintained, would propel the ship to nearly the speed of light. Unfortunately, the scooping system would also produce drag forces, slowing the ship, and the headwind of particles would cook the crew with radiation. Also, pure-hydrogen fusion is inefficient. A fusion-powered ship probably couldn't avoid hauling some fuel from

Going Dark: Scavenging Exotic Matter

Instead of scavenging hydrogen gas, Jia Liu, a physics graduate student at New York University, has proposed foraging for dark matter, the invisible exotic material that astronomers think makes up the bulk of the galaxy. Particle physicists hypothesize that dark matter consists of a type of particle called the neutralino, which has a useful property: When two neutralinos collide, they annihilate each other in a blaze of gamma rays. Such reactions could drive a ship forward. Like the hydrogen scooper, a dark-matter ship could approach the speed of light. The problem, though, is that dark matter is dark—meaning it doesn't respond to electromagnetic forces. Physicists know of no way to collect it, let alone channel it to produce rocket thrust.

If engineers somehow overcame these problems and built a near-light-speed ship, not just Alpha Centauri but the entire galaxy would come within range. In the 1960s astronomer Carl Sagan calculated that, if you could attain a modest rate of acceleration—about the same rate a sports car uses—and maintain it long enough, you'd get so close to the speed of light that you'd cross the galaxy in just a couple of decades of shipboard time. As a bonus, that rate would provide a comfortable level of artificial gravity.

On the downside, hundreds of thousands of years would pass on Earth in the meantime. By the time you got back, your entire civilization might have gone ape. From one perspective, though, this is a good thing. The tricks relativity plays with time would solve the eternal problem of too-slow computers. If you want to do some eons-long calculation, go off and explore some distant star system and the result will be ready for you when you return. The starship crews of the future may not be voyaging for survival, glory, or conquest. They may be solving puzzles.

Going Warp: Bending Time and Space

With a ship moving at a tenth the speed of light, humans could migrate to the nearest stars within a lifetime, but crossing the galaxy would remain a journey of a million years, and each star system would still be mostly isolated. To create a galactic version of the global village, bound together by planes and phones, you'd need to travel faster than light.

Contrary to popular belief, Einstein's theory of relativity does not rule that out completely. According to the theory, space and time are elastic; what we perceive as the force of gravity is in fact the warping of space and time. In principle, you could warp space so severely that you'd shorten the distance you want to cross, like folding a rug to bring the two sides closer together. If so, you could cross any distance instantaneously. You wouldn't even notice the acceleration, because the field would zero out g-forces inside the ship. The view from the ship windows would be stunning. Stars would change in color and shift toward the axis of motion.

It seems almost mean-spirited to point out how far beyond our current technology this idea is. Warp drive would require a type of material that exerts a gravitational push rather than a gravitational pull. Such material contains a negative amount of energy—literally less than nothing, as if you had a mass of –50 kilograms. Physicists, inventive types that they are, have imagined ways to create such energy, but even they throw up their hands at the amount of negative energy a starship would need: a few stars' worth. What is more, the ship would be impossible to steer, since control signals, which are restricted to the speed of light, wouldn't be fast enough to get from the ship's bridge to the propulsion system located on the vessel's perimeter. (Equipment within the ship, however, would function just fi

When it comes to starships, it's best not to get hung up on details. By the time humanity gets to the point it might actually build one, our very notions of travel may well have changed. "Do we need to send full humans?" asks Long. "Maybe we just need to send embryos, or maybe in the future, you could completely download yourself into a computer, and you can remanufacture yourself at the other end through something similar to 3-D printing." Today, a starship seems like the height of futuristic thinking. Future generations might find it quaint.

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george musser is a writer on physics and cosmology and author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide To String Theory* (Alpha, 2008). He was a senior editor at *Scientific American* for 14 years and has won honors such as the American Institute of Physics Science Writing Award.

Chemistry & Fuels

The matter in our world is recycled. The pair of articles here explores how elements and atoms wend their way through space and time. Students will explore how chemical reactions usher elements through their journeys. *You Are Made of Waste* illustrates, in five short vignettes, the lives of the elements that make up our teeth, fi breath, hair, and blood. *Frack 'er Up* is an in-depth look at the botched promise of biofuel—energy from cars made from renewable plant growth.

In the "curriculum" section of the teacher's notes, you will find information on how these pieces can help fulfill requirements of the Next Generation Science Standards. Specifically, they make for entry points to—or a means of reinforcing—lessons on photosynthesis, chemical reactions, valence electrons, and energy. But more than that, these lessons will connect to the students' daily lives, and spark discussion.

Lesson Plan:

Ask students to read one or both of the articles for homework. Briefly introduce or review the vocabulary words in class. Assign all or a selection of the reading comprehension questions for the students to complete along with the reading, and ask them to come up with one question for further discussion. (Note that a couple of the questions for each article are redundant.)

Start class with students raising any technical questions they might have about the readings. Ask them to contribute their discussion questions, and write these on the board, along with the questions provided in the teacher's notes. Ask the students to break into small groups; assign each group to address a question, and briefly present to the class for further discussion. **30-45 MIN**

In the following class time (or another class) have the students complete one or more of the activities in the teacher's notes in small groups. **30 MIN**

Teacher's Notes: You Are Made of Waste

VOCAB WORDS

Mass: a physical property that describes an object's resistance to force. The mass of an object can be used to calculate its weight: (mass) x (gravitational force) = weight.

Carbon: an element found in stars, planets, comets, as well as in all known living things.

Radioactive decay: the process by which a nucleus ejects alpha particles, particles of ionizing radiation. A nucleus that does this is considered "unstable;" a substance that contains unstable nuclei is considered "radioactive." This process usually only occurs in atoms heavier than iron.

Fusion: when two or more nuclei collide, fusing to make a new nucleus and releasing energy. This process usually only occurs in atoms lighter than iron.

Chemical bond: an attraction between two or more atoms that allows them to form a substance of definite chemical composition. Breaking these bonds requires energy.

Petroleum: a "fossil fuel" that forms when organisms are crushed under rock and subjected to lots of pressure, and lots of time. Like the organisms it's made of, petroleum consists largely of carbon.

READING COMPREHENSION

1. "Each of those waste molecules is a carbon atom borne on two atomic wings of oxygen." Write out the chemical equation for the molecule described here.
2. "Organic" is used in two different ways in this piece. What are the two different definitions?
3. What does it mean for a chemical to be "highly reactive?" Identify oxygen's location on the periodic table, the group of atoms that it belongs to, and why they are considered "highly reactive."
4. Which elements on the periodic table are the least reactive?
5. "Fossil-based carbon dioxide molecules that are not soaked up by oceans or stranded in the upper atmosphere are eventually captured by plants, shorn of their oxygen wings, and woven into botanical sugars and starches." What is the process described here? (Hint: it is mentioned by name later in the piece.) Write down the equation for this reaction.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. "Chemophobia" is the fear of chemicals. What are some chemophobic practices or products that we engage with? Are there good reasons to be afraid of chemicals?
2. How does the story change the way you see yourself? Others?

ACTIVITIES

1. Pick an element not discussed in this article. Where else is it found? Where did it come from?
2. Draw a map or annotated illustration of all the places carbon goes in this article. Use outside research to complete a full picture of the carbon cycle.

ADDITIONAL MULTIMEDIA

1. ***Whose air do you share?***
   (It's OK To Be Smart, PBS) **3 MIN 30 SEC**
   A video that explains how we breathe recycled air—including molecules of air exhaled by Einstein himself:
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BybkIJysAKc
2. ***We Are Star Stuff segment***
   (Carl Sagan's Cosmos) **8 MIN**
   Carl Sagan explains how the elements of life were born in stars, evolved into simple organisms, then into us: intelligent creatures, capable of exploring the stars we came from:
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iE9dEAx5Sgw
3. ***The Microbes We're Made Of***
   (Smithsonian.com) **2 MIN 30 SEC**
   We're not just made of waste. We're made of trillions of other organisms. This video provides a quick exploration of the microbiome crucial to keeping our bodies working, and what we're doing to kill them:
   http://www.smithsonianmag.com/videos/category/3play_1/the-microbes-were-made-of/?no-ist

WHERE THIS FITS IN THE CURRICULUM

***Chemical Reactions** (HS-PS1-2)* Construct and revise an explanation for the outcome of a simple chemical reaction based on the outermost electron states of atoms, trends in the periodic table, and knowledge of chemical properties.

Matter and its interactions *(HS-PS1-1)* Use the periodic table as a model to predict the relative properties of elements based on the patterns of electrons in the outermost energy level of atoms.

From molecules to organisms: structure and processes *(HS-LS1-6)* Construct and revise an explanation based on evidence for how carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen from sugar molecules may combine with other elements to form amino acids and/or other large carbon-based molecules.

Ecosystems: Interactions, energy and dynamics *(HS-LS-3)* Construct and revise an explanation based on evidence for the cycling of matter and flow of energy in aerobic and anaerobic conditions.

Teacher's Notes: Frack 'er Up

VOCAB WORDS

Ethanol: also found in beer and wine, it is a kind of biofuel that is sometimes added to gasoline for use in automobiles. Ethanol can be made from corn, potatoes, or green plants. Its chemical formula is CH_3CH_2OH.

Biofuel: a fuel made from plants or other organisms, in recent time.

Biomass: material from recently living organisms.

Organic compound: a molecule containing carbon.

Hydrocarbon: Made of just hydrogen and carbon, these are the simplest kind of organic compound.

Octane: a highly flammable hydrocarbon, and component of gasoline. Its chemical formula is C_8H_{18}.

Catalyst: a component of a chemical reaction that helps facilitate the reaction, but is not used up.

READING COMPREHENSION

1. "Plant biomass absorbs carbon dioxide as it grows." What is the name of the process by which plants do this? Look up and write down the chemical reaction.
2. A polymer is a chain of molecules. Identify a kind of polymer in the story, and the monomer that composes it.
3. Plants need carbon dioxide for photosynthesis. What are some of the sources for this carbon dioxide?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it advantageous for companies to be green?
2. Would you pay more for gas—or any other product, say a shirt—from a "green" company? What if some of that company's practices were just as questionable as those of "dark" companies?
3. How would the world change if gasoline could be made cheaply from natural gas? Should we consider this technology to be progress given that natural gas has it's own environmental consequences.

ACTIVITIES

1. Have students construct a timeline of fuel. Ask them to include dates mentioned from the story, and to research and add other relevant information: like the moment in history when organisms die, the life cycle of a tree that contributed the author's container of Primus fuel.
2. Draw a map or annotated illustration of all the places carbon goes in this article. Use outside research to complete a full picture of the carbon cycle.
3. Write a 30-second ad convincing car drivers to pay a premium for green gasoline like Primus'. Include "fine print"—side effects, or caveats—as you see necessary.

ADDITIONAL MULTIMEDIA

1. ***Algae*** (The Guardian)
An interactive slide show that illustrates how biofuels are made out of algae:

http://www.theguardian.com/environment/interactive/2008/jun/26/algae
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BybkIJysAKc

2. ***Bioprospecting*** (TED-Ed) **4 MIN**
   An animated video introducing the concept of biofuels, and how they could help reduce reliance on our planet's limited supply of fossil fuels: http://ed.ted.com/lessons/biofuels-and-bioprospecting-for-beginners-craig-a-kohn

3. ***The Microbes We're Made Of*** (Smithsonian.com) **2 MIN 30 SEC**
   We're not just made of waste. We're made of trillions of other organisms. This video provides a quick exploration of the microbiome crucial to keeping our bodies working, and what we're doing to kill them: http://www.smithsonianmag.com/videos/category/3play_1/the-microbes-were-made-of/?no-ist

WHERE THIS FITS IN THE CURRICULUM

Matter and energy in organisms and ecosystems *(HS-LS1-5)* Use a model to illustrate how photosynthesis transforms light energy into stored chemical energy.

History of the Earth *(HS-ESS1-6)* Apply scientific reasoning and evidence from ancient Earth materials, meteorites, and other planetary surfaces to construct an account of Earth's formation and early history.

Chemical reactions *(HS-PS1-2)* Construct and revise an explanation for the outcomes of simple chemical reactions based on the outermost electron state of atoms, trends in the periodic table, and knowledge of the patterns of chemical properties.

Ecosystems: Interactions, energy and dynamics *(HS-LS-3)* Construct and revise an explanation based on evidence for the cycling of matter and flow of energy in aerobic and anaerobic conditions.

You Are Made of Waste

Searching for the ultimate example of recycling? Look in the mirror

BY CURT STAGER

YOU MAY THINK OF YOURSELF as a highly refined and sophisticated creature—and you are. But you are also full of discarded, rejected, and recycled atomic elements. Don't worry, though—so is almost everyone and everything else.

Carbon: Your inky nails

Look at one of your fingernails. Carbon makes up half of its mass, and roughly 1 in 8 of those carbon atoms recently emerged from a chimney or a tailpipe. Coal-fired power plants, petroleum-guzzling cars, and kitchen gas stoves release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Each of those waste molecules is a carbon atom borne on two atomic wings of oxygen. Fossil-based carbon dioxide molecules that are not soaked up by the oceans or stranded in the upper atmosphere are eventually captured by plants, shorn of their oxygen wings, and woven into botanical sugars and starches. Eventually, some of them end up in bread, sweets, and vegetables, while others help form carbon-rich animal tissues, finding their way into meat and dairy products. Historically, atmospheric carbon dioxide was mainly replenished by volcanoes, forest fires, and biotic respiration. Today, one quarter of atmospheric CO_2 is the result of fossil fuel combustion, whether it rose from smokestacks or was displaced from the oceans. (When fossil-fuel CO_2 dissolves into ocean water, it displaces already-dissolved carbon dioxide derived from natural sources.) And because all of the carbon in your body derives from ingested organic matter, which in turn obtains it from the atmosphere, your fingernails and the rest of the organic matter in your body are built, in part, from emissions.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY YUKO SHIMIZU